



THE #1 *NEW YORK TIMES* BEST-SELLING SERIES

BATMAN

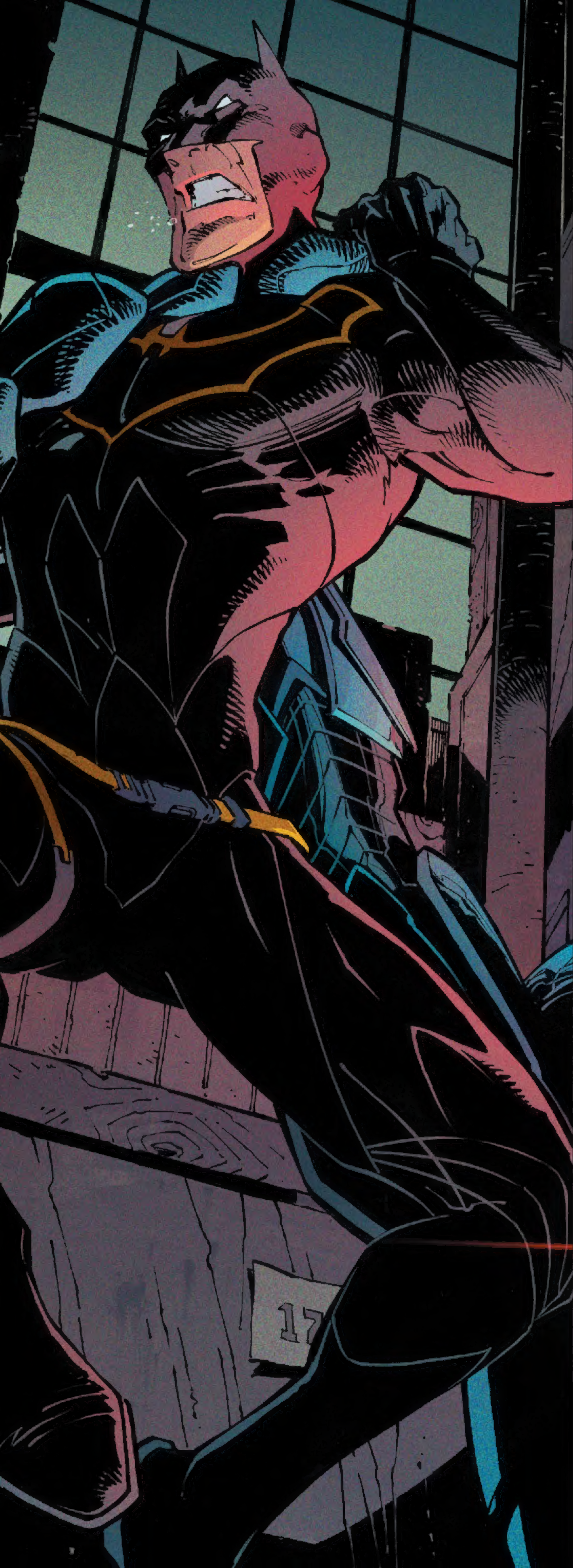
VOLUME 9
BLOOM



SCOTT SNYDER GREG CAPULLO
DANNY MIKI YANICK PAQUETTE FCO PLASCENCIA

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BATMAN





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BATMAN

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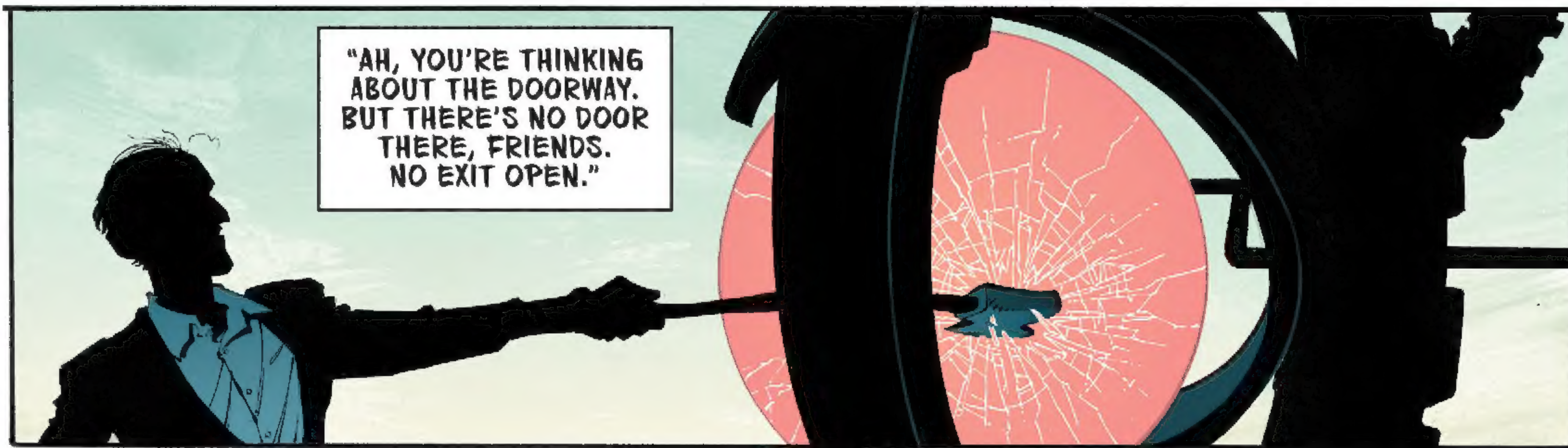
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BATMAN VOLUME 9: BLOOM

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"AH, YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT THE DOORWAY. BUT THERE'S NO DOOR THERE, FRIENDS. NO EXIT OPEN."

POWERS BUILDING. NOW.



NO DOOR I CAN'T GET TO BEFORE YOU. SO SETTLE IN!

LET'S START OVER, SHALL WE? LOOK AT THIS! SO MANY FAMILIAR FACES! I THINK I ACTUALLY KNOW...ALL OF YOU. NICE.

ME, THEY CALL ME MISTER BLOOM.

AND I'M HERE TODAY TO TALK ABOUT LAWN MAINTENANCE.

AW, I WAS ONLY KIDDING, MISTER CROWNE. WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

OUT OF MY WAY!




HERE, RELAX...

PLIP


...HAVE SOME DIP.

SKUSH







SEE, TRULY,
I'M JUST HERE
TO CELEBRATE
WITH YOU.



ALL OF YOU
GOOD FOLK WHO
TOIL SO RELENTLESSLY
TO MAKE GOTHAM
BETTER, MAKE IT
EXACTLY WHAT IT
IS TODAY.




YOU
KNOW, I WAS
ONE OF YOU,
ONCE.

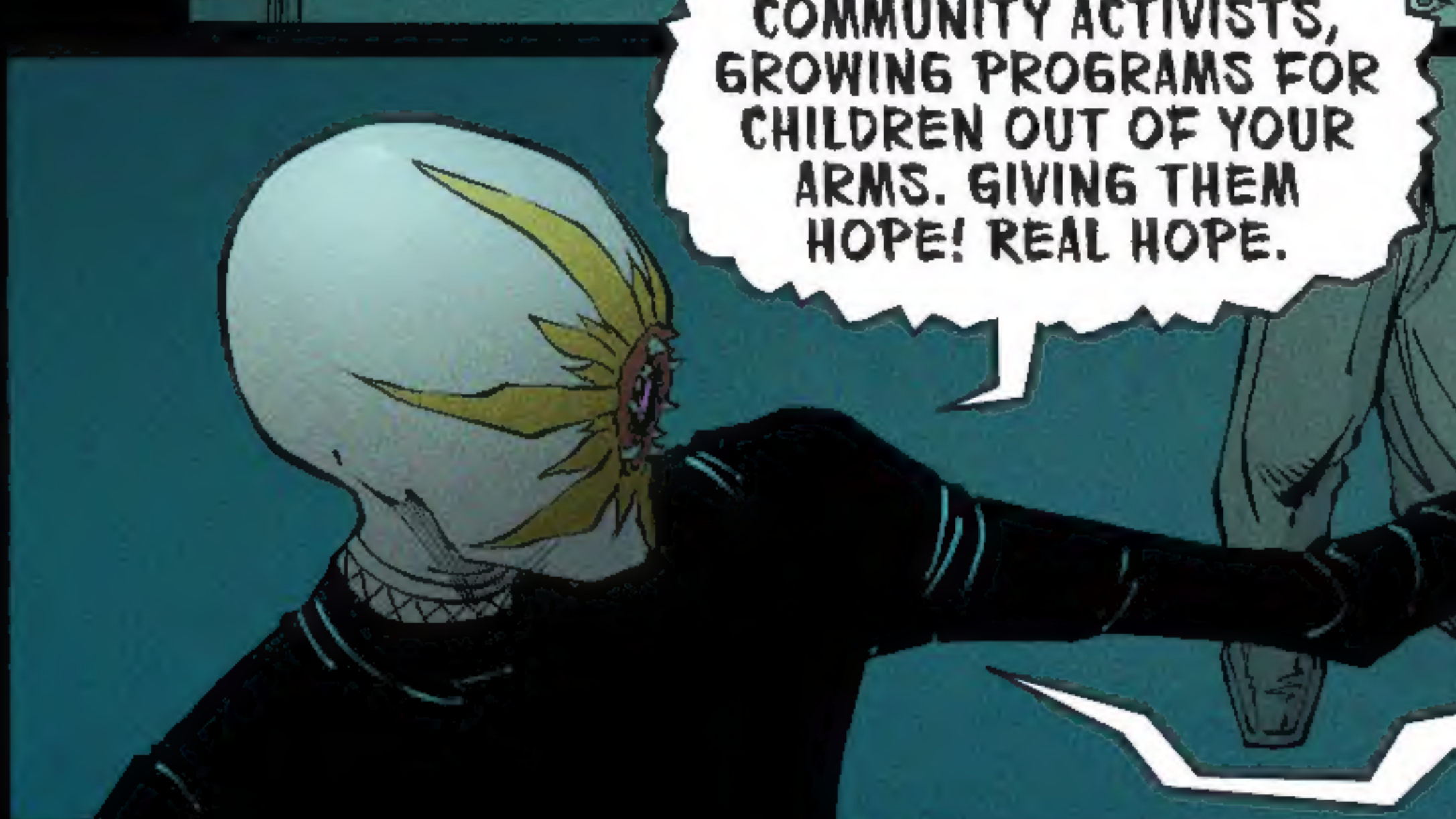


A
BLEEDING
HEART.

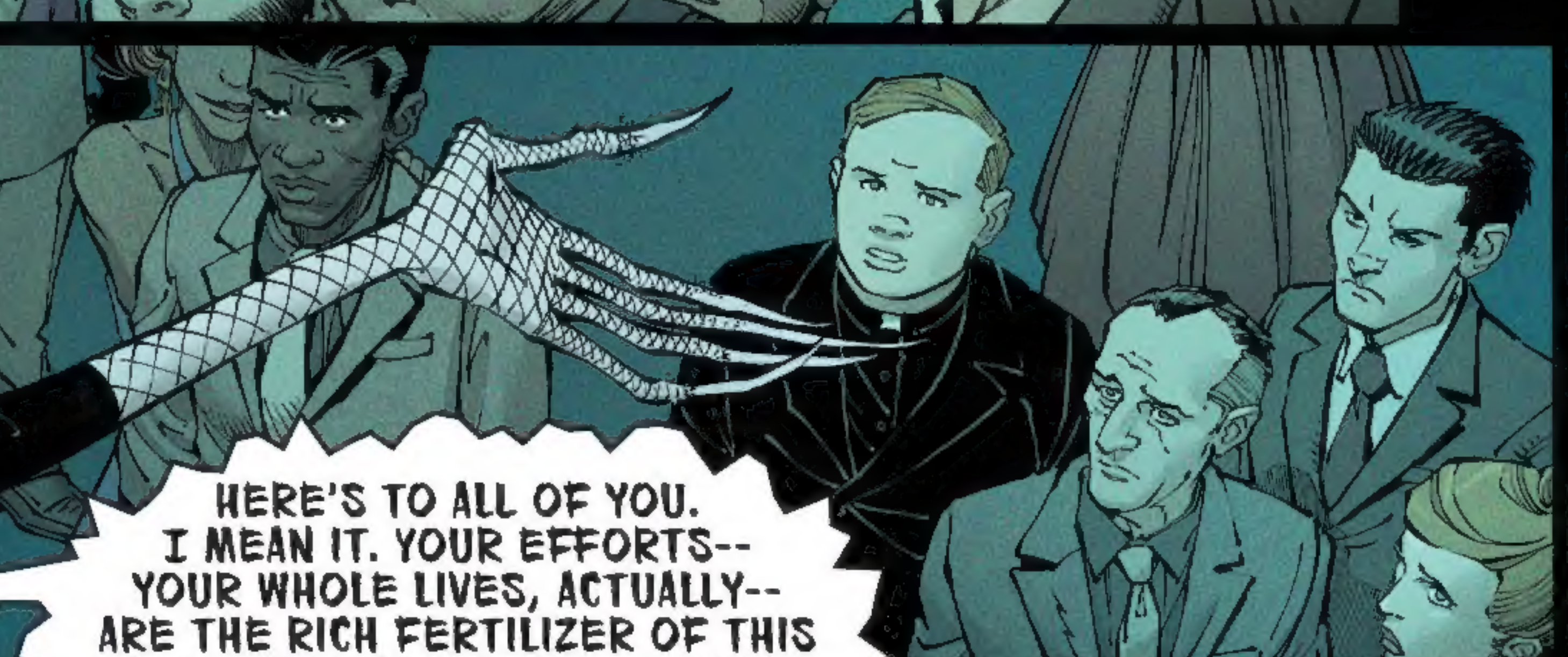
AGH!



A SOLIDER
FOR GOTHAM. LIKE YOU.
COMMISSIONER SAWYER.
TRYING TO GROW A NEW
POLICE FORCE RIGHT OUT
OF YOUR SHOULDERS.



OR ALL YOU
COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS,
GROWING PROGRAMS FOR
CHILDREN OUT OF YOUR
ARMS. GIVING THEM
HOPE! REAL HOPE.




HERE'S TO ALL OF YOU.
I MEAN IT. YOUR EFFORTS--
YOUR WHOLE LIVES, ACTUALLY--
ARE THE RICH FERTILIZER OF THIS
GREAT CITY. (MAYBE I AM TALKING
ABOUT LAWN MAINTENANCE
AFTER ALL.)

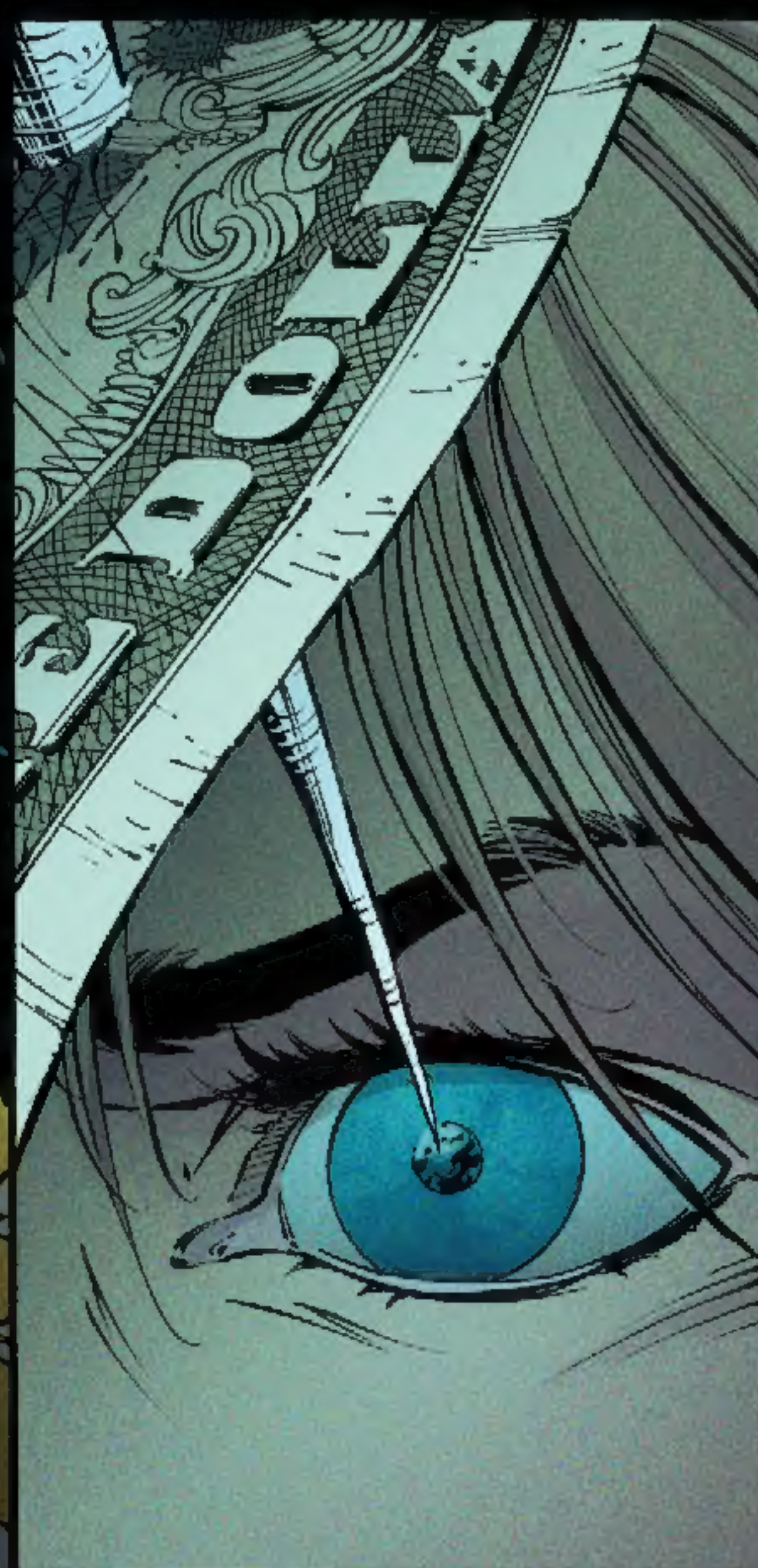
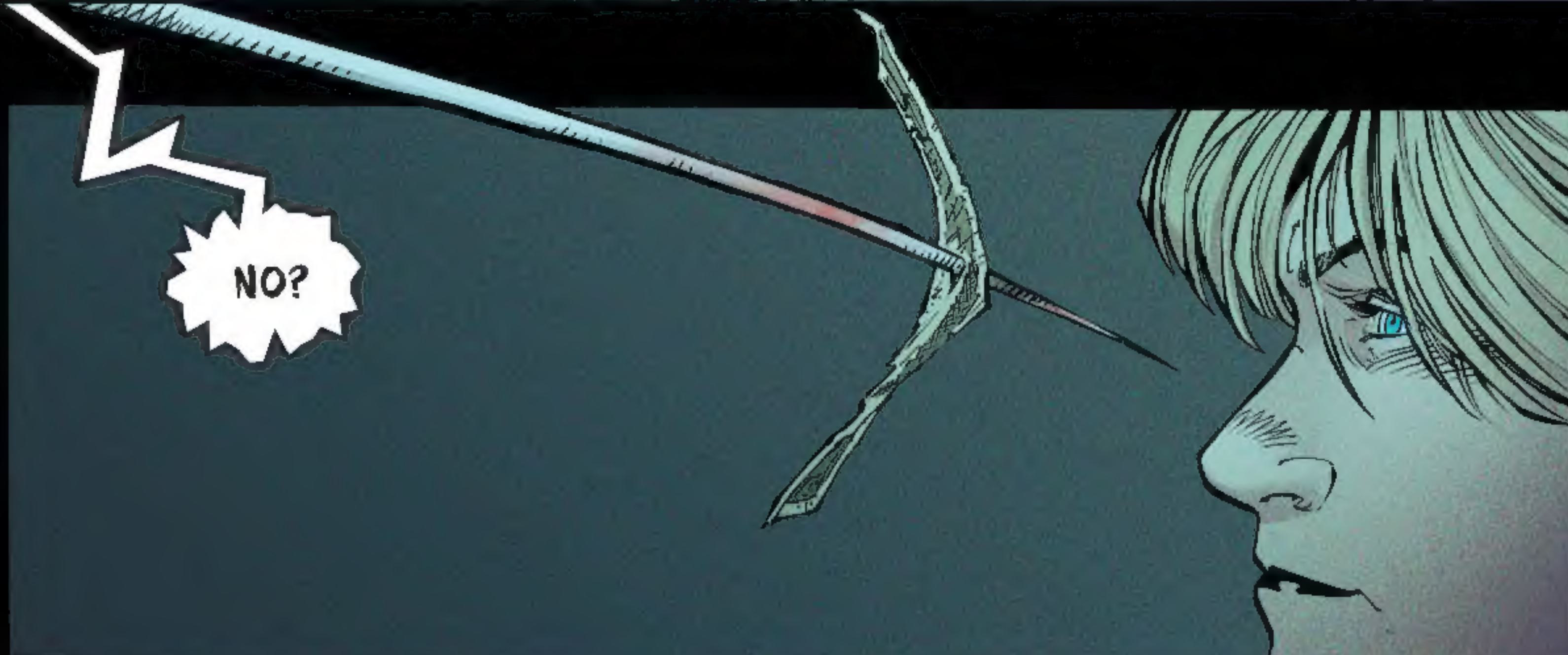
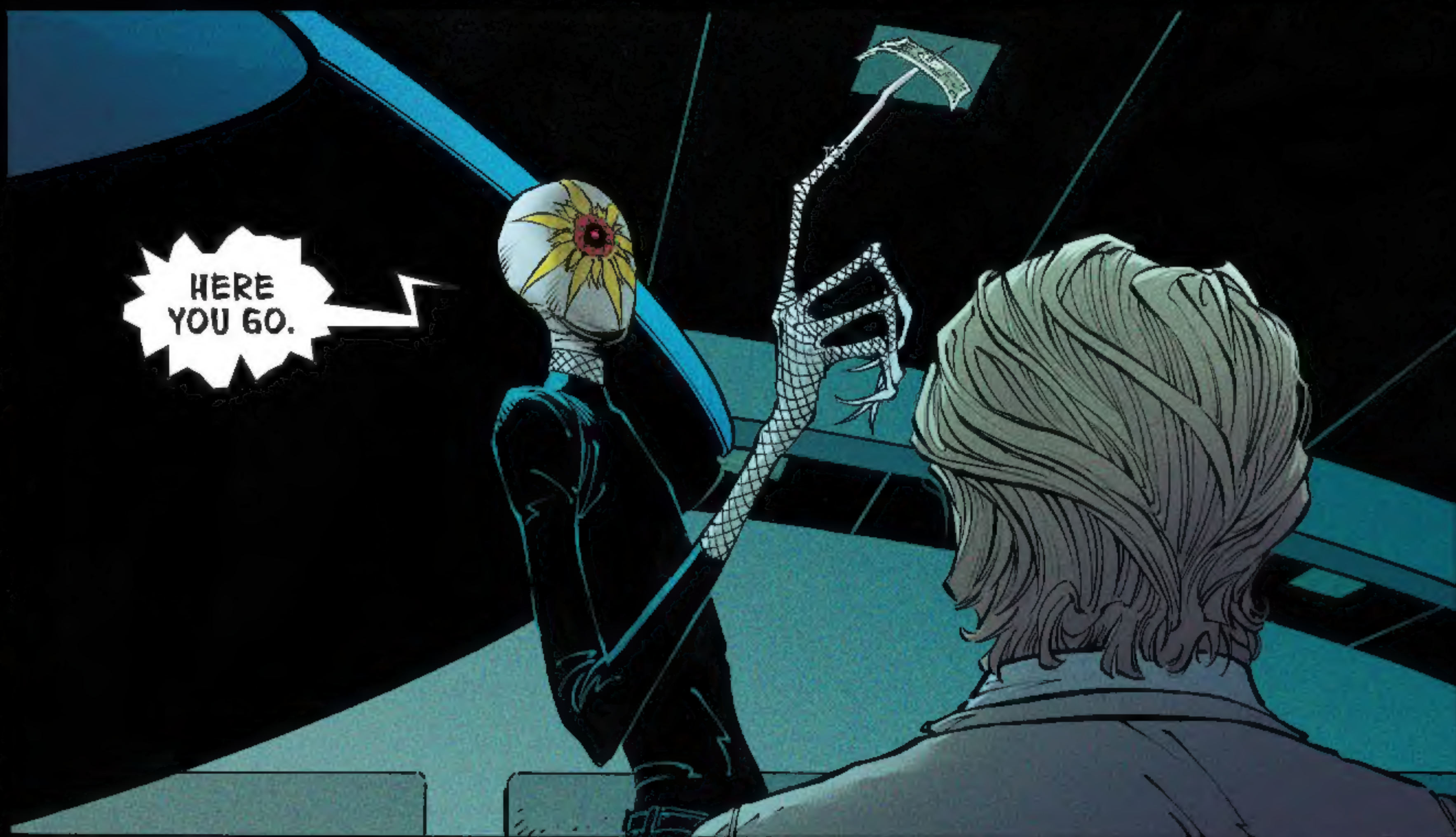
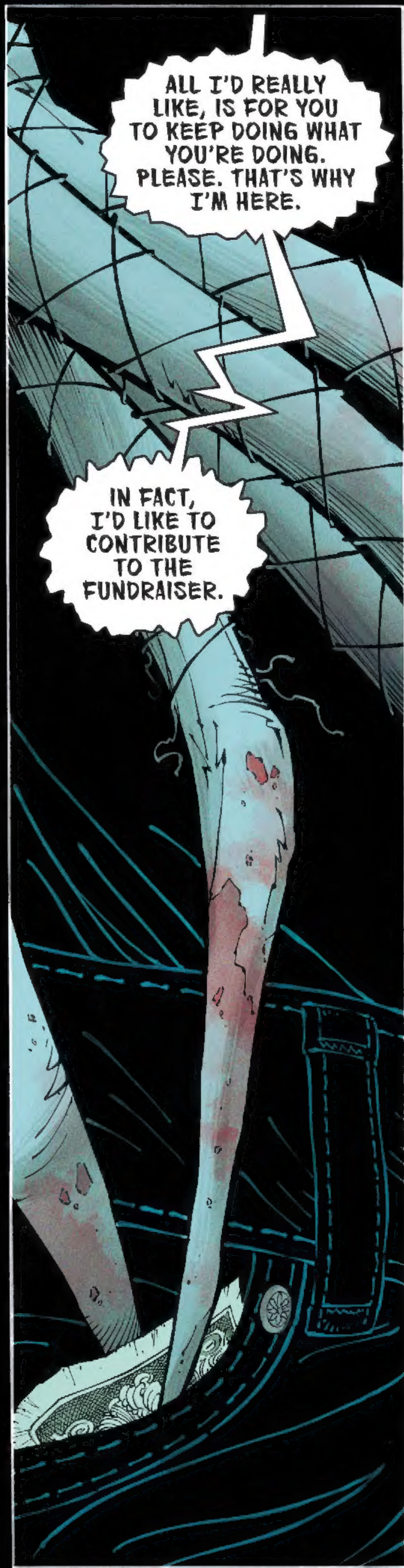


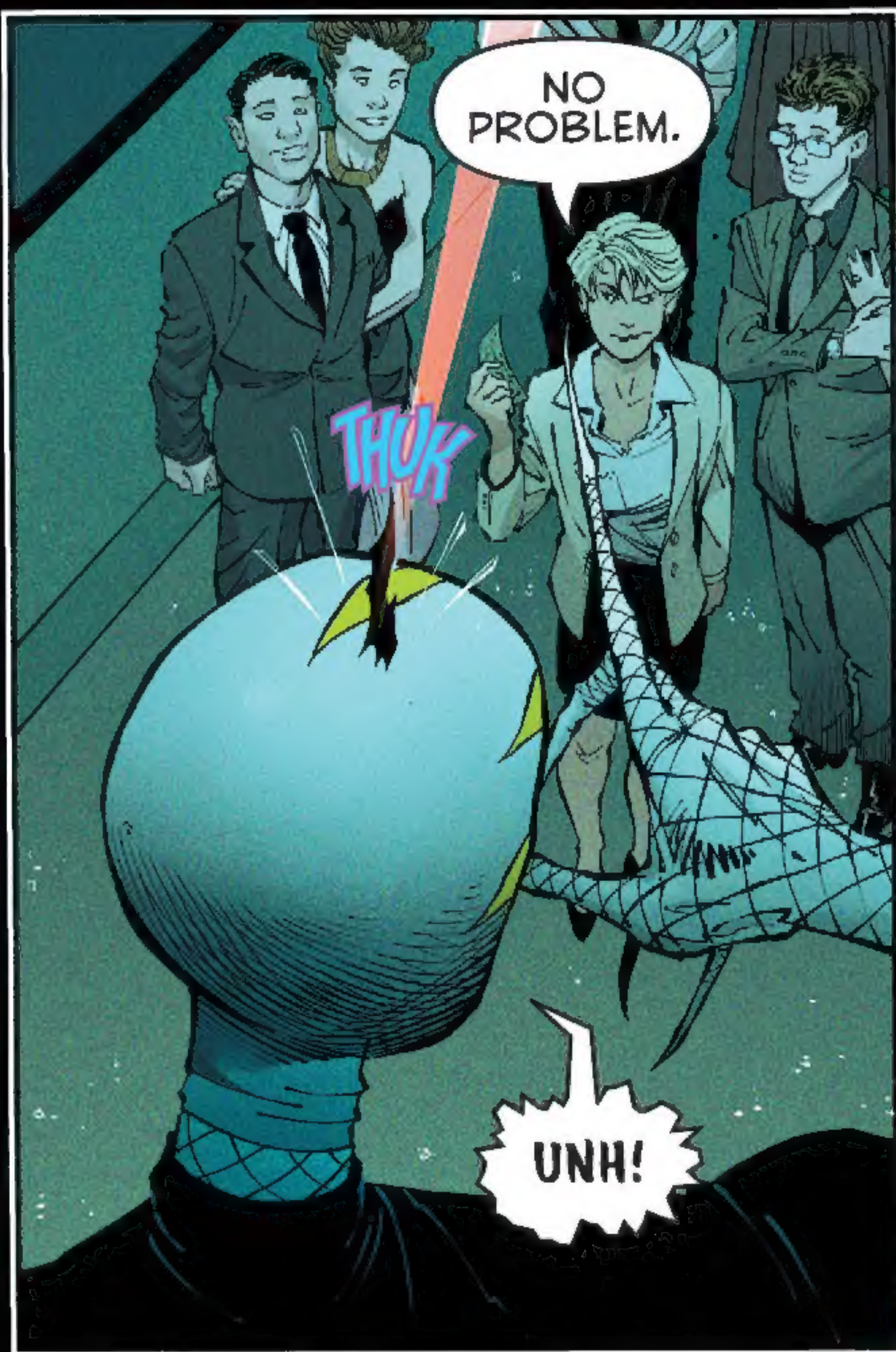
YOU GIVE
YOURSELVES OVER
TO GOTHAM SO THAT
AMAZING THINGS MAY
GROW HERE...

AAAGH!



...THINGS...
LIKE ME.





NO PROBLEM.

THUK

UNH!



I'M CHEAP, BUT NOT *THAT* CHEAP, BLOOM!

Pleasework
pleasework
pleasework.

ROOM
ROOM
ZZZZT!



THERE YOU ARE!

And...you didn't work.

AGH!



AND OUT OF YOUR LITTLE SQUAD-BOT.

DON'T unh INSULT MY PARTNER.



HEY, ROOKIE...

GO PICK SOME FLOWERS!



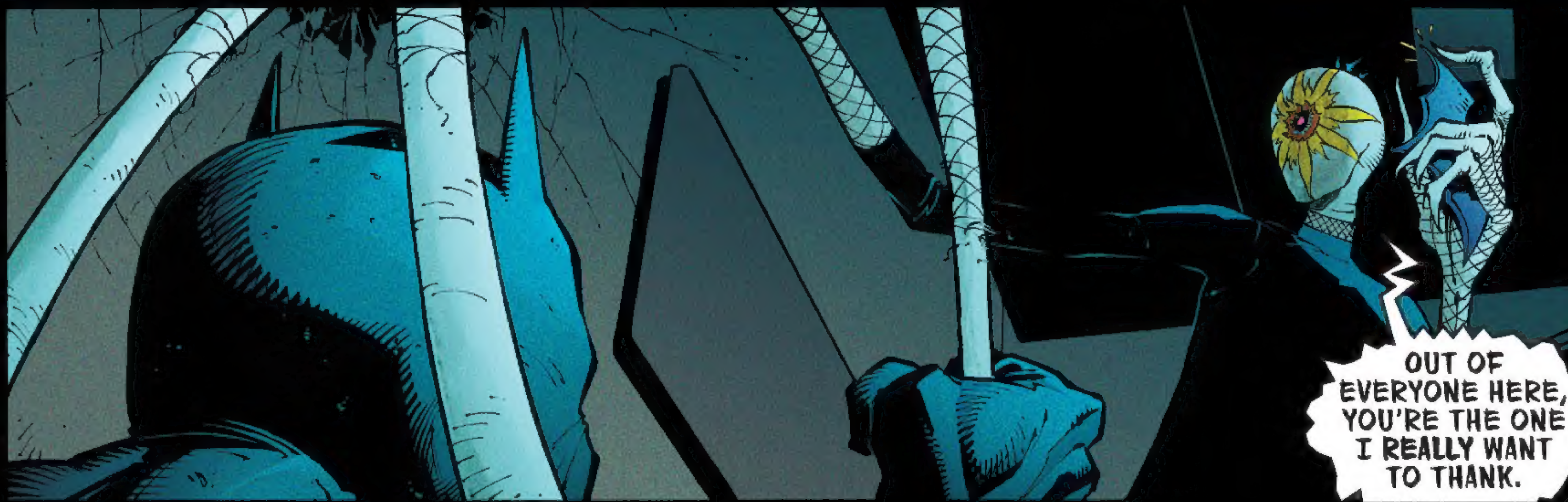


AW. IT
LIKES YOU.
THAT'S
CUTE.



...I
LIKE YOU,
TOO.

PSHHK



OUT OF
EVERYONE HERE,
YOU'RE THE ONE
I REALLY WANT
TO THANK.



NOW
HOLD
STILL.

AA
AGGH!

SK
US
SH



I WANT TO PIN THIS ON JUST
RIGHT. AFTER ALL, BECAUSE
OF YOU, "BAT" HAS LOST ALL
ITS MEANING.

THAT'S
THE REAL
FEAT...



...THE GREAT
SYMBOL HAS NO
POWER IN GOTHAM
ANYMORE.

WHIRRRR



⇒COUGH⇒
I OWE YOU,
JULIA.



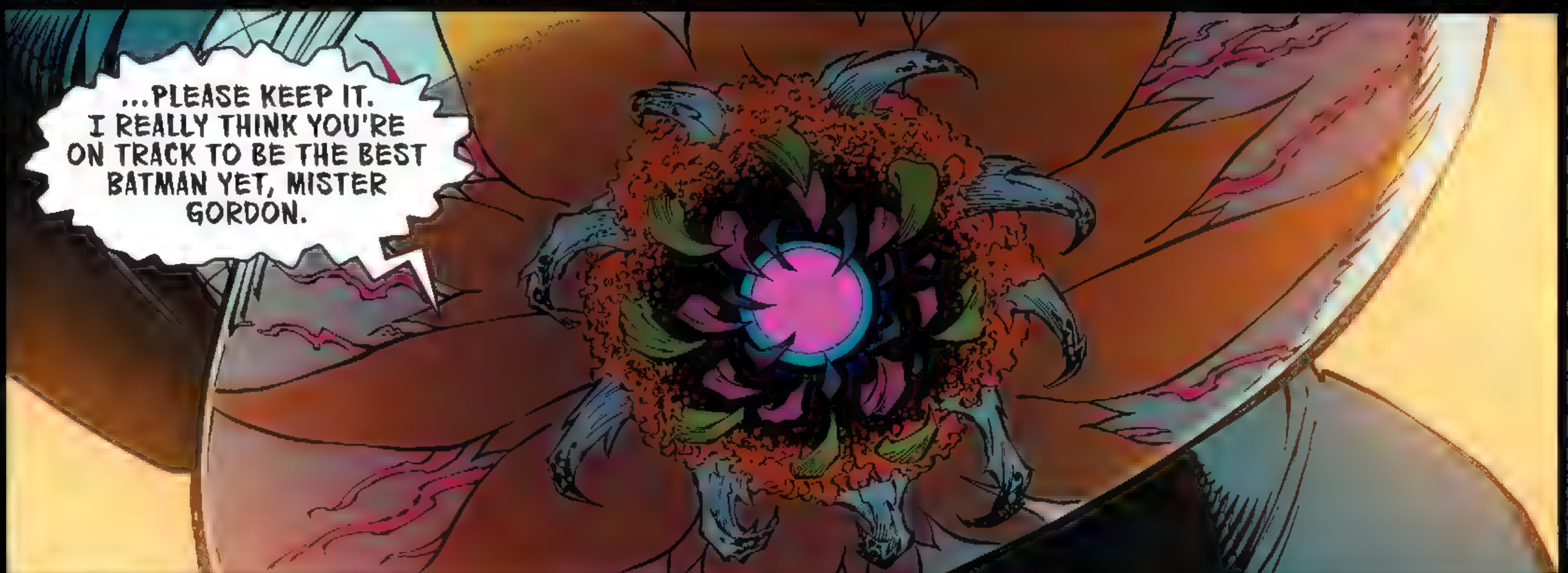
IT WAS *YOUR*
BLOODY IDEA. I
LIKE TO THINK I WOULD
HAVE THOUGHT OF IT,
THOUGH. SIMPLE
AS IT IS.

SEEING AS
THE BAT-SIGNAL
USES AN *ELECTRO*
MAGNET TO HOLD
THE ROBO-SUIT AND
BLOOM'S *SEEDS* ARE
ELECTRO MAGNETIC.
FIND THE RIGHT
FREQUENCY AND
HE'S POTTED.

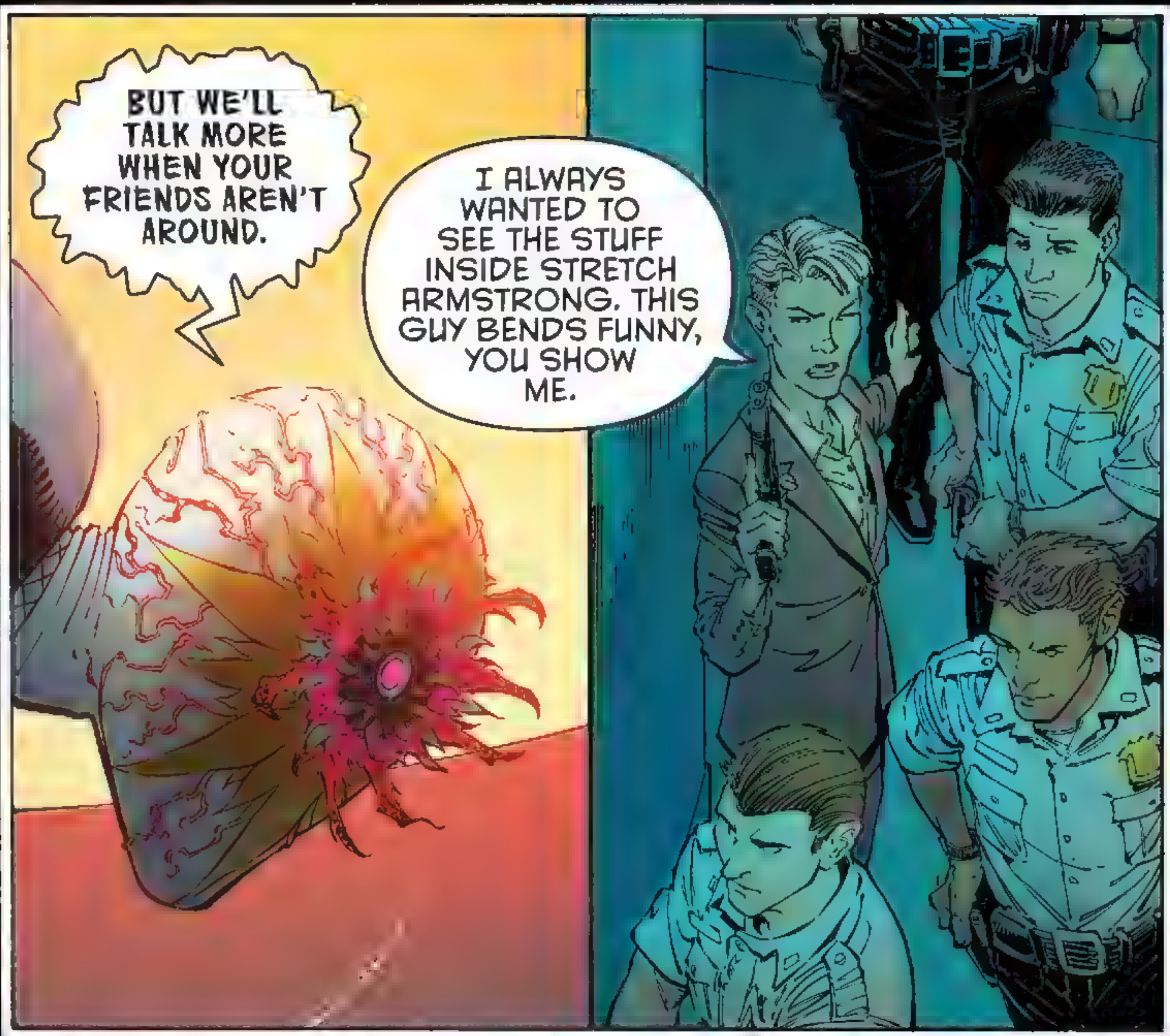


YOU WERE SAYING
SOMETHING, BLOOM?
BACK WHEN YOU COULD
MOVE? ABOUT THE SYMBOL
HAVING *NO POWER* AND
SOMETHINGSOMETHING?
I UNDERSTAND IF YOU
WANT YOUR DOLLAR
BACK.

HA.
NOT AT
ALL...



...PLEASE KEEP IT.
I REALLY THINK YOU'RE
ON TRACK TO BE THE BEST
BATMAN YET, MISTER
GORDON.



BUT WE'LL
TALK MORE
WHEN YOUR
FRIENDS AREN'T
AROUND.

I ALWAYS
WANTED TO
SEE THE STUFF
INSIDE STRETCH
ARMSTRONG. THIS
GUY BENDS FUNNY,
YOU SHOW
ME.



DON'T BE A
STRANGER.

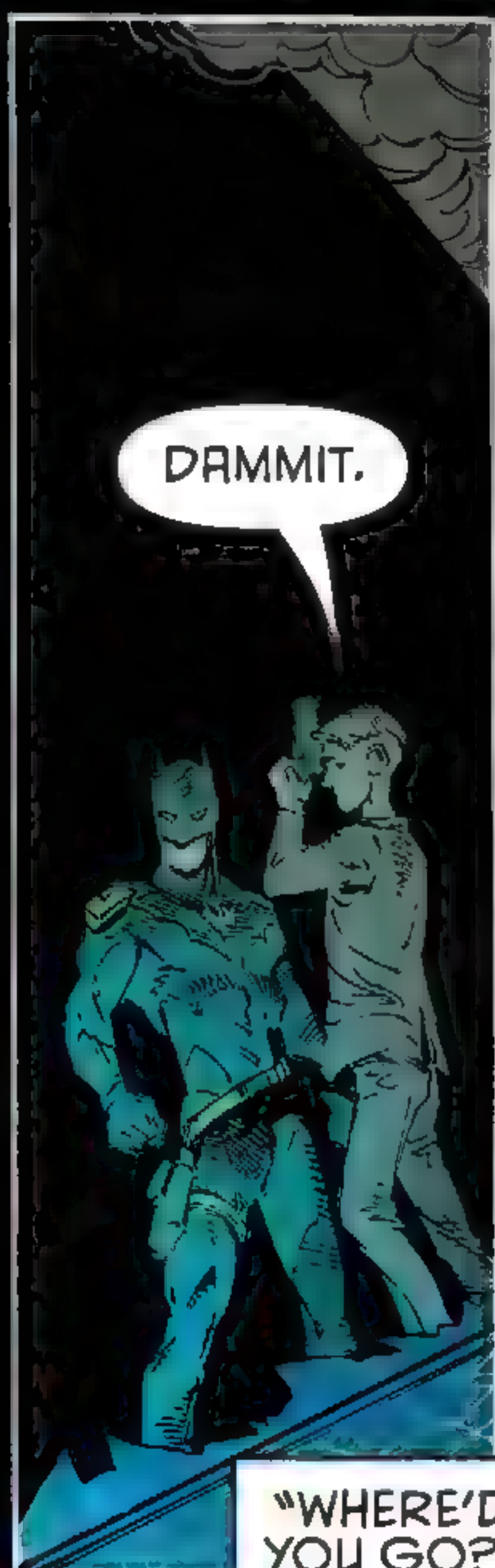
YEAH, I'LL
BE SURE TO
VISIT YOU IN
ARKHAM.



CRASH

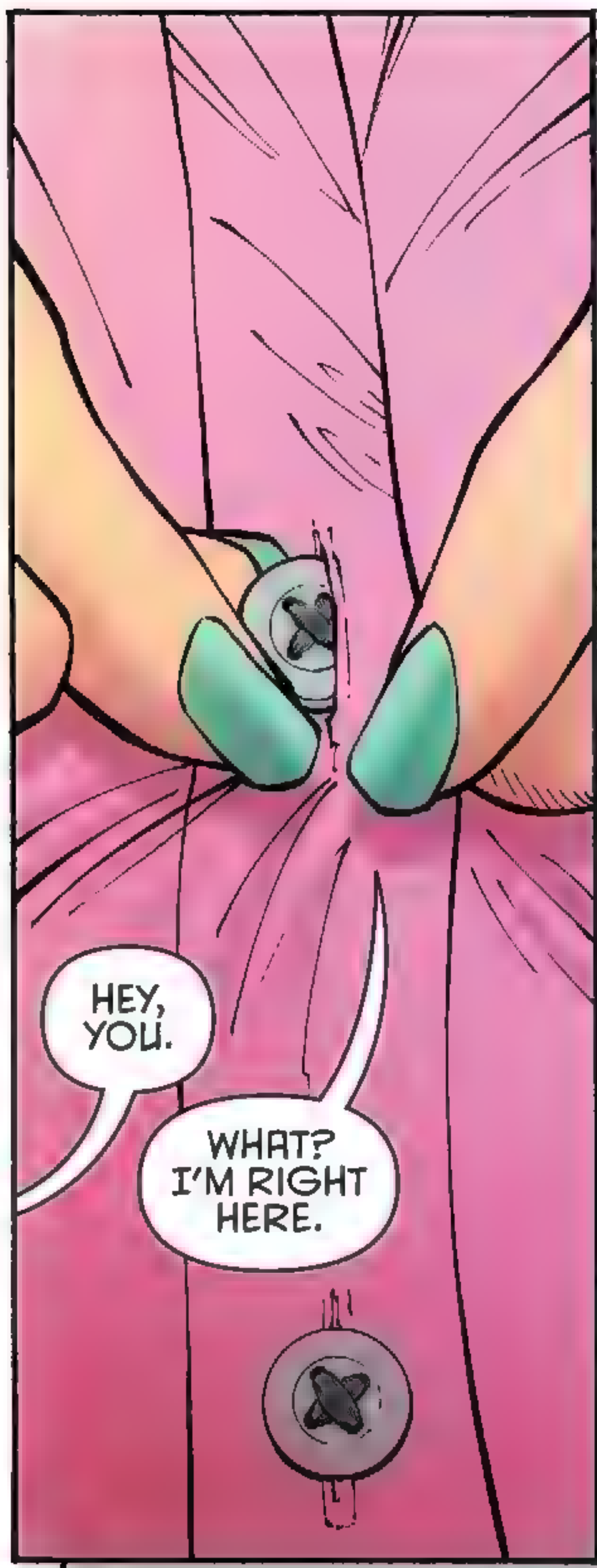


NO!
STOP
HIM!



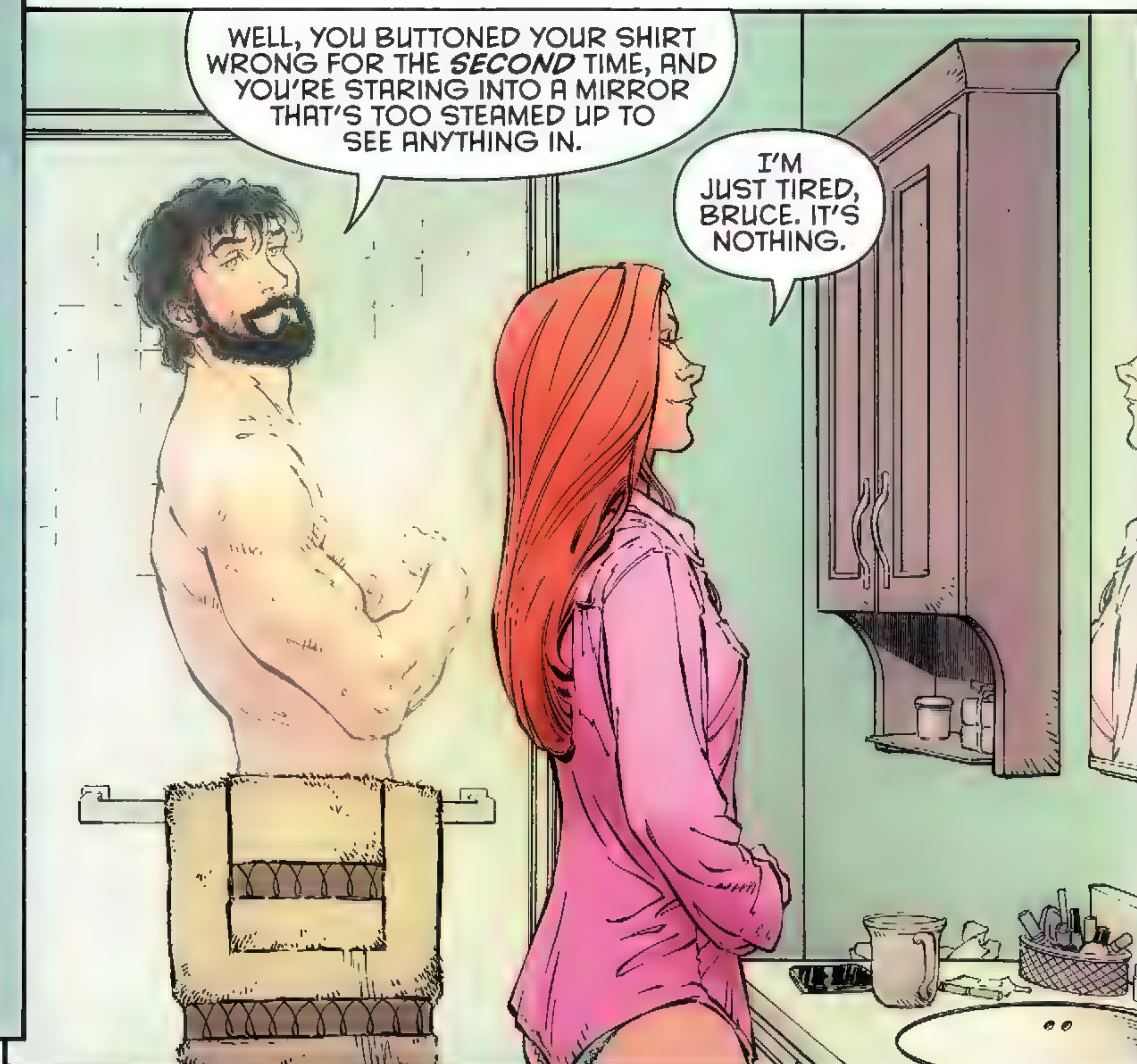
DAMMIT.

"WHERE'D
YOU GO?"



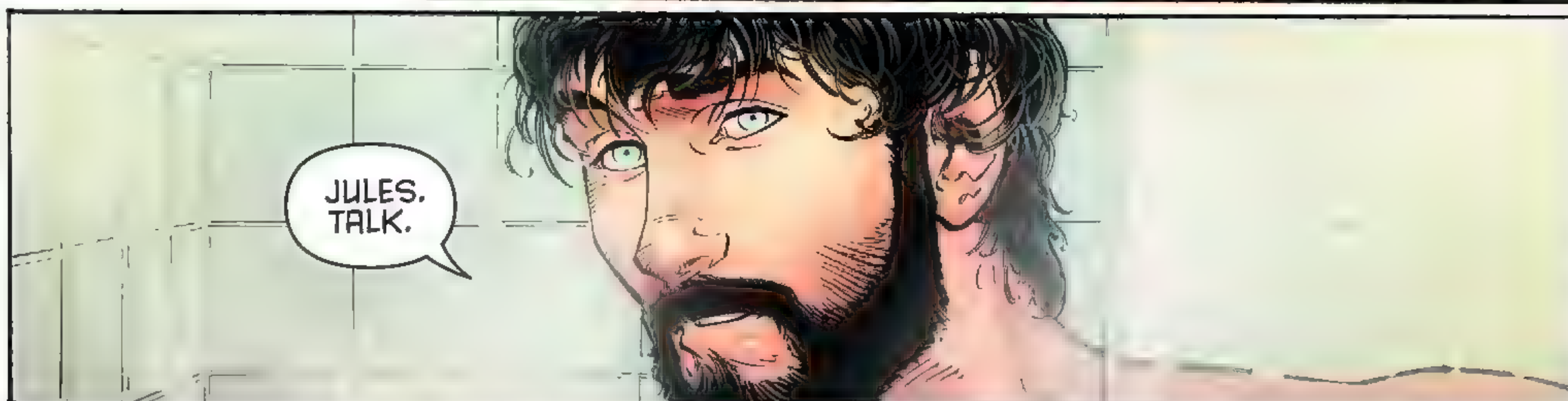
HEY,
YOU.

WHAT?
I'M RIGHT
HERE.

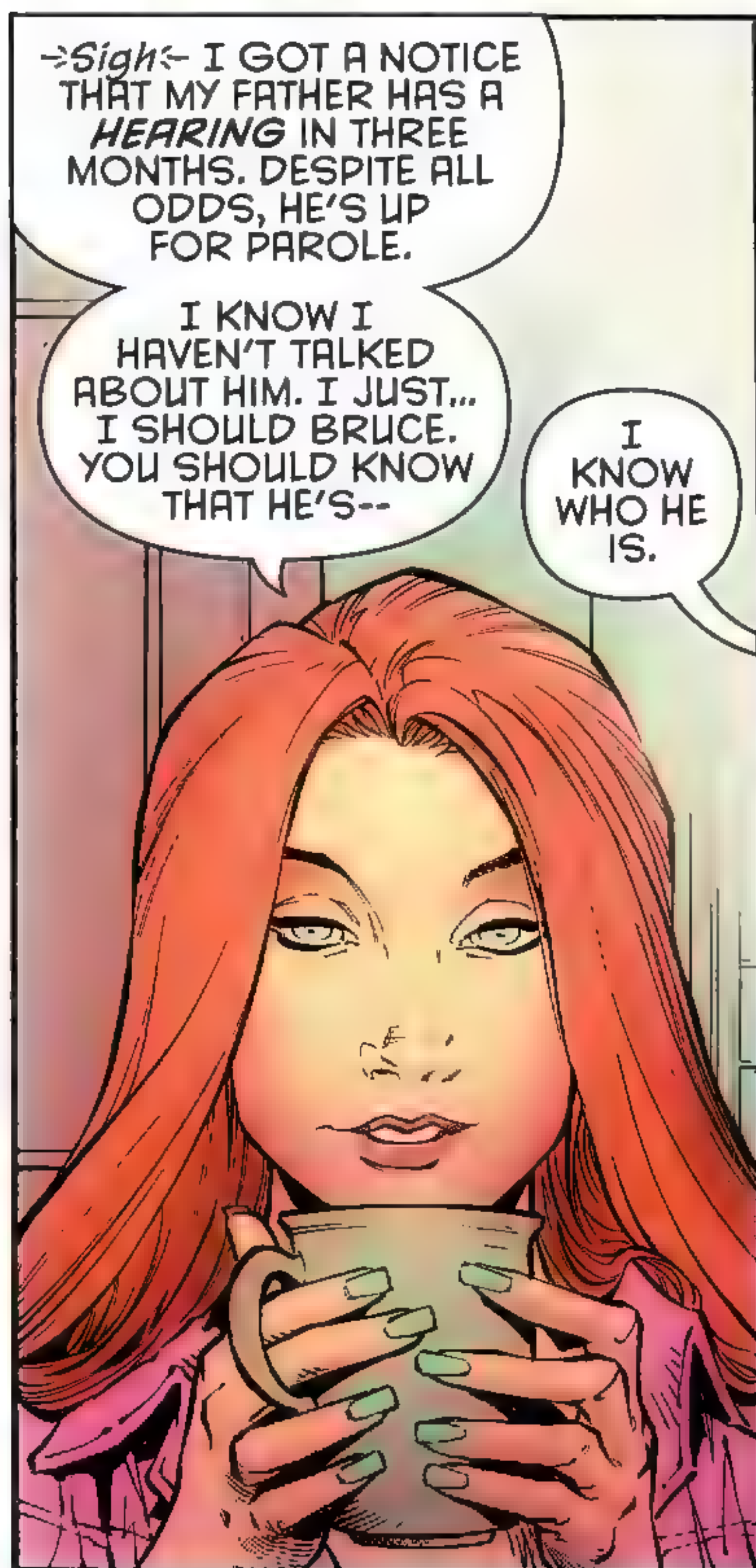


WELL, YOU BUTTONED YOUR SHIRT
WRONG FOR THE *SECOND* TIME, AND
YOU'RE STARING INTO A MIRROR
THAT'S TOO STEAMED UP TO
SEE ANYTHING IN.

I'M
JUST TIRED,
BRUCE. IT'S
NOTHING.



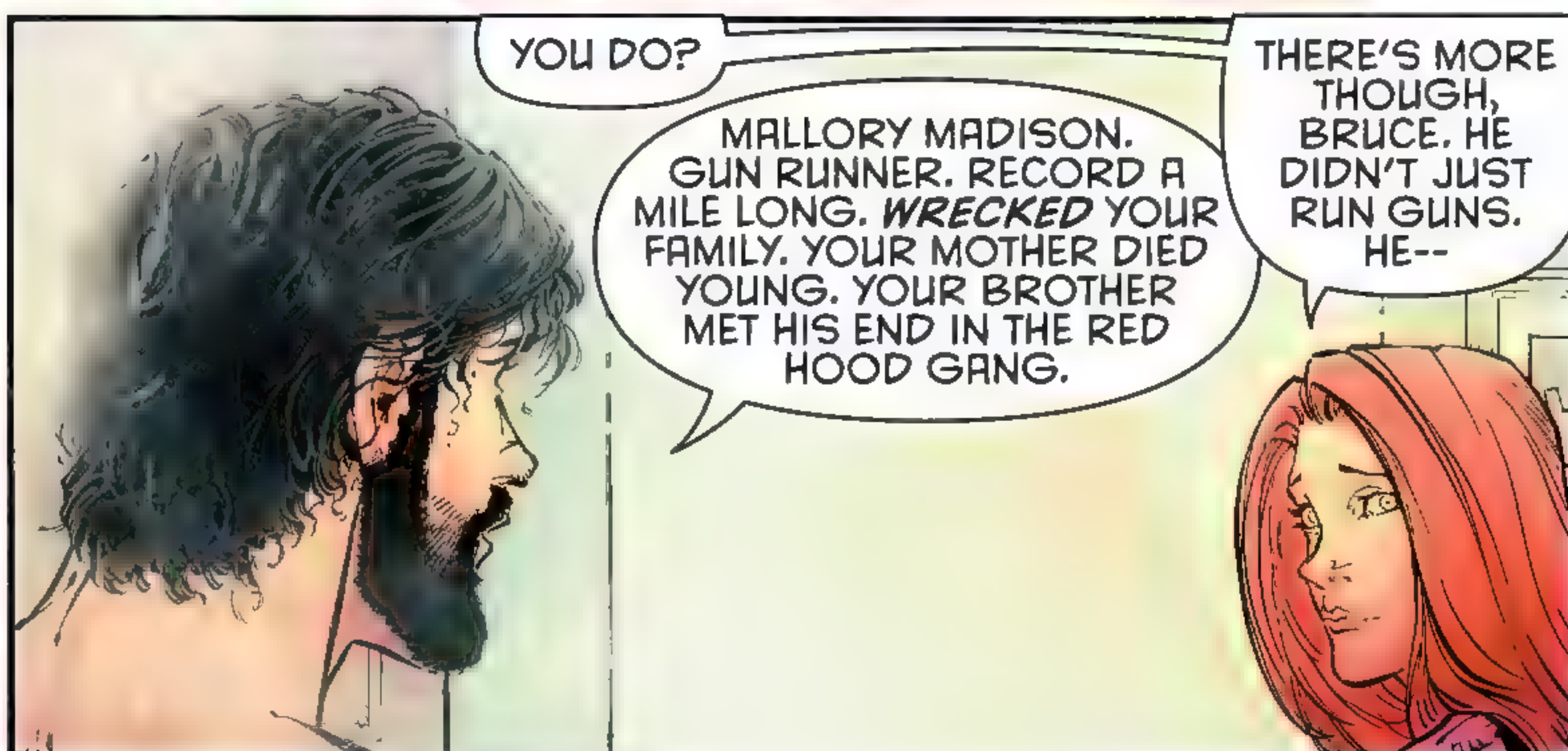
JULES.
TALK.



⇒Sigh⇒ I GOT A NOTICE
THAT MY FATHER HAS A
HEARING IN THREE
MONTHS. DESPITE ALL
ODDS, HE'S UP
FOR PAROLE.

I KNOW I
HAVEN'T TALKED
ABOUT HIM. I JUST...
I SHOULD BRUCE.
YOU SHOULD KNOW
THAT HE'S--

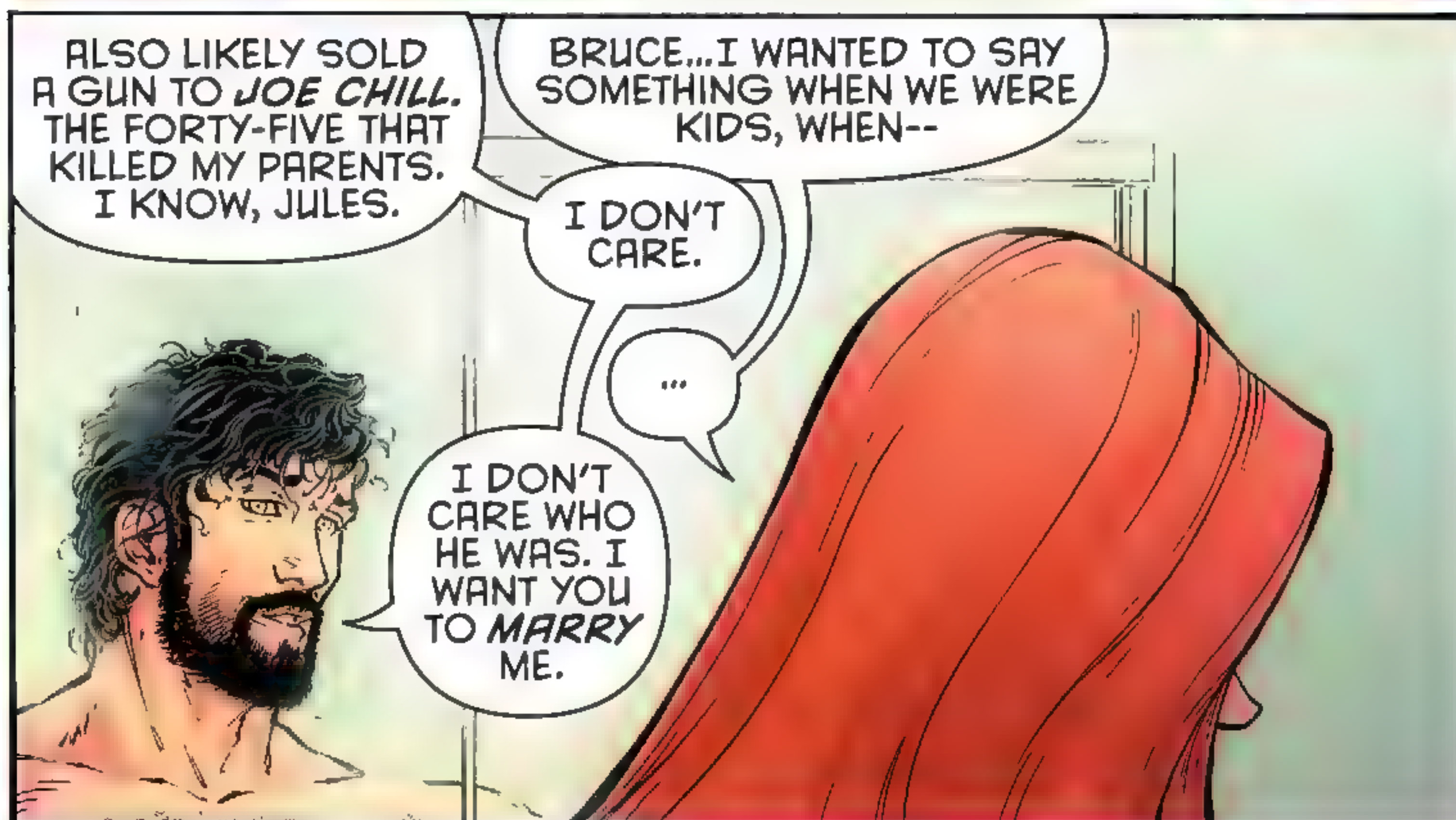
I
KNOW
WHO HE
IS.



YOU DO?

MALLORY MADISON.
GUN RUNNER. RECORD A
MILE LONG. *WRECKED* YOUR
FAMILY. YOUR MOTHER DIED
YOUNG. YOUR BROTHER
MET HIS END IN THE RED
HOOD GANG.

THERE'S MORE
THOUGH,
BRUCE. HE
DIDN'T JUST
RUN GUNS.
HE--

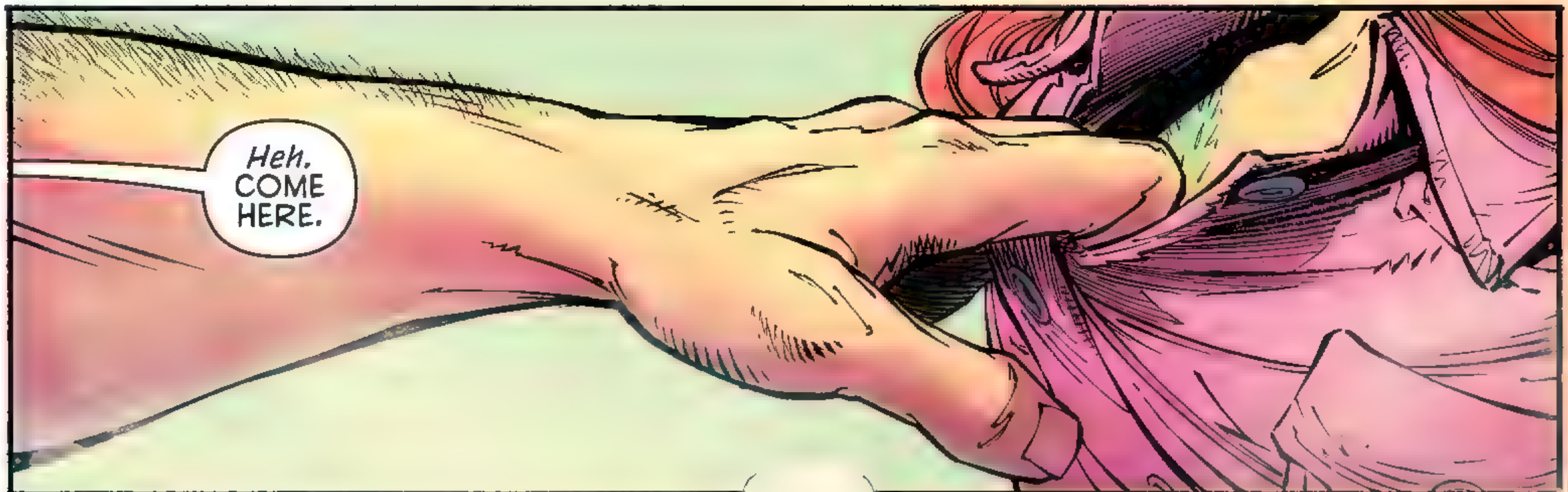
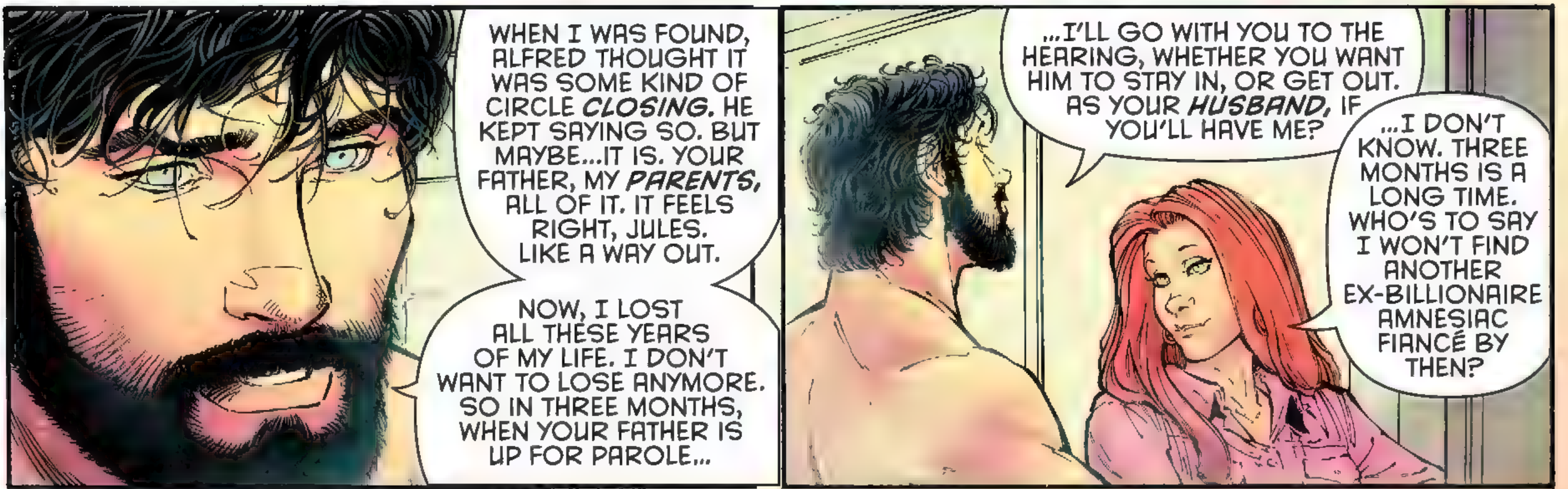
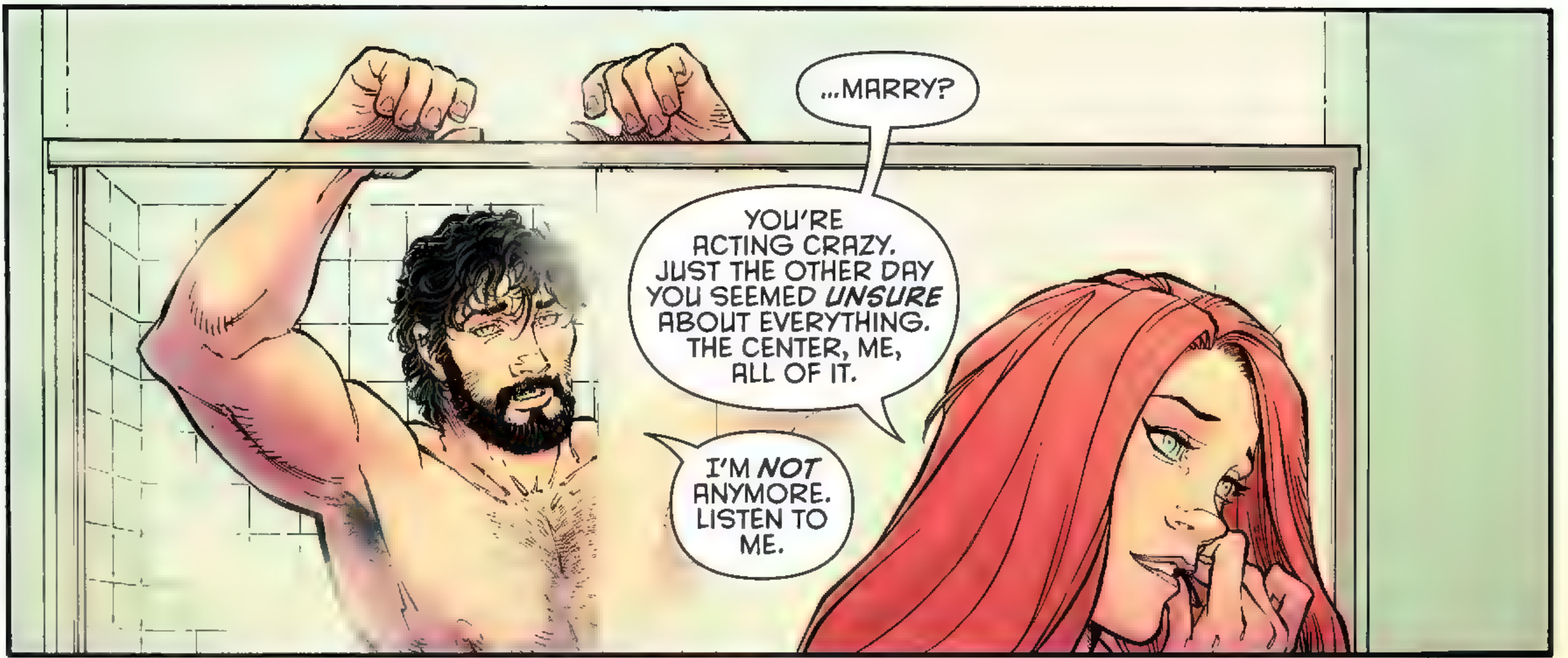


ALSO LIKELY SOLD
A GUN TO *JOE CHILL*.
THE FORTY-FIVE THAT
KILLED MY PARENTS.
I KNOW, JULES.

BRUCE...I WANTED TO SAY
SOMETHING WHEN WE WERE
KIDS, WHEN--

I DON'T
CARE.

I DON'T
CARE WHO
HE WAS. I
WANT YOU
TO *MARRY*
ME.



"THAT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN AROUND HERE..."

...PEOPLE JUST
AREN'T SUPPOSED
TO BE MISSING THIS
LONG IN A CITY LIKE
GOTHAM.

NEARLY EVERY
SINGLE PERSON WHO WAS
INFECTED BY THE JOKER'S
VIRUS HAS BEEN CURED AND
ACCOUNTED FOR, EXCEPT YOUR
PARENTS. IT'S AN INCREDIBLY
SHORT LIST THEY'RE ON, DUKE.
WE'LL FIND THEM SOON.
I KNOW WE WILL.

WHAT I'M
SAYING IS,
DON'T GIVE UP
HOPE, ALL
RIGHT?

NOT A
POSSIBILITY,
DARYL.

GOOD. BUT
ALSO, WE GO BACK,
AND I KNOW THAT
DURING CRISES YOUR
FOLKS ALWAYS STEPPED
UP. THEY ALWAYS DID
MORE THAN WAS
EXPECTED.

WHEN THEY
SAVED BRUCE
WAYNE IN THE
ZERO YEAR, AND
THEN DURING
THE JOKER
ATTACK...

I KNOW YOU LIKELY FEEL THE
NEED TO DO THE SAME, WHICH
IS WHY YOU ASKED ME ABOUT
BLOOM, BUT I'M TELLING YOU,
YOU NEED TO *STAY OFF*
THAT TRAIL.

I AM. I'M AT THE FOX
CENTER EATING CHURROS
RIGHT NOW.

GOOD
BECAUSE--

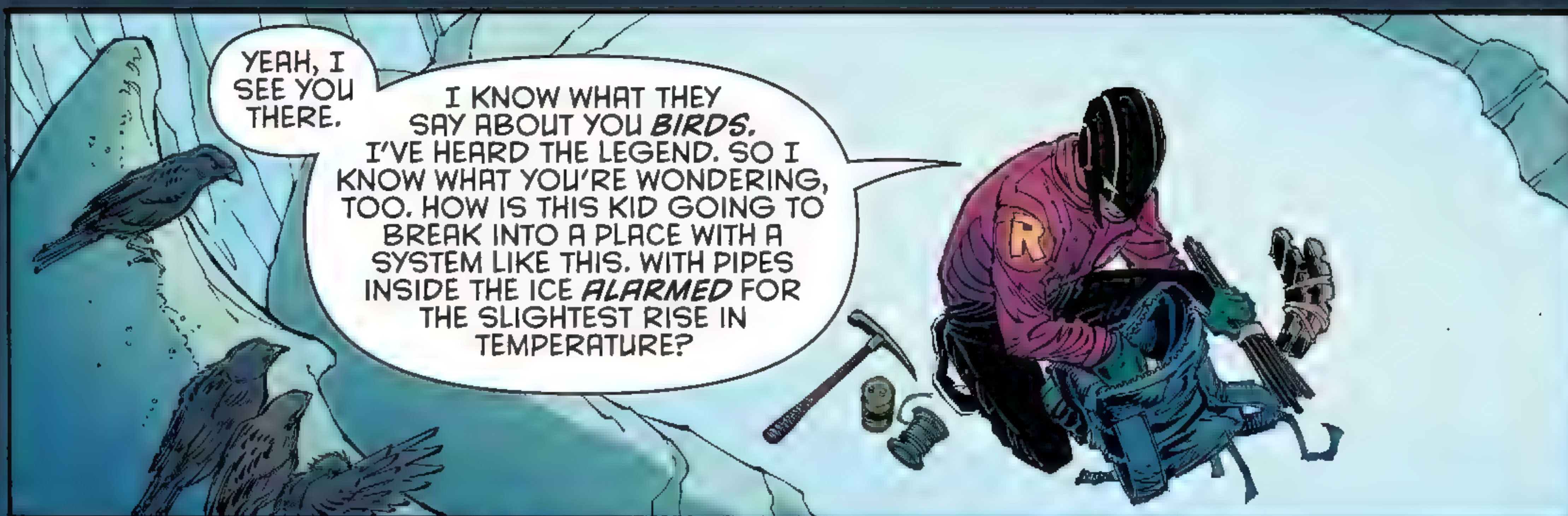
DAMN!

DUKE? WHAT'S
GOING ON?

NOTHING.
JUST A COUPLE
OF *RATS*.

AT THE
FOX
CENTER.

IT'S GONE
DOWNHILL SINCE
WE WERE KIDS.
ONE OF THEM IS
EATING MY
PHONE. I GOT
TO GO.



YEAH, I
SEE YOU
THERE.

I KNOW WHAT THEY
SAY ABOUT YOU *BIRDS*.
I'VE HEARD THE LEGEND. SO I
KNOW WHAT YOU'RE WONDERING,
TOO. HOW IS THIS KID GOING TO
BREAK INTO A PLACE WITH A
SYSTEM LIKE THIS. WITH PIPES
INSIDE THE ICE *ALARMED* FOR
THE SLIGHTEST RISE IN
TEMPERATURE?

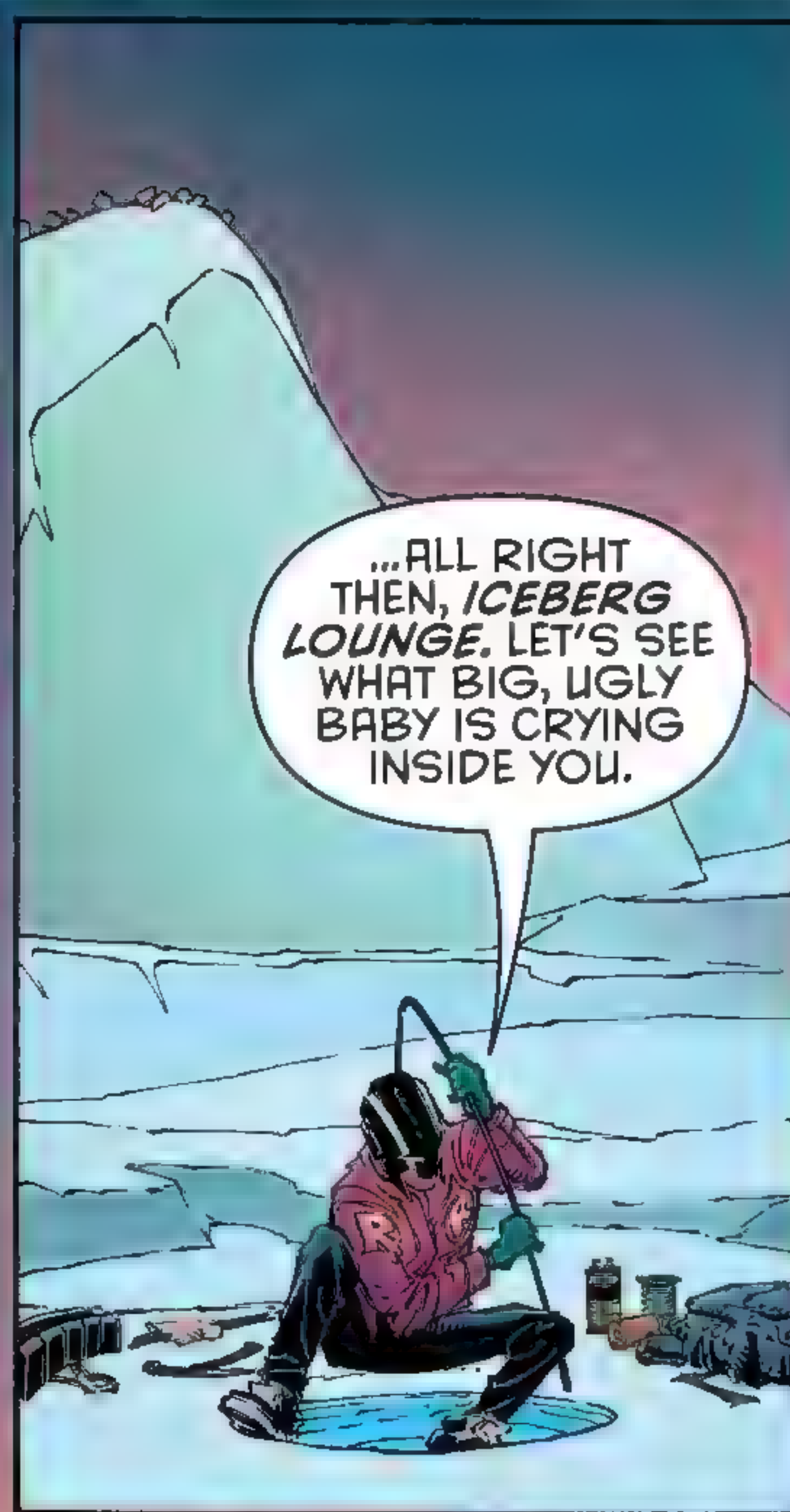


SEE, MY MOM,
SHE'S A SOCIAL WORKER.
SHE HAS THIS TECHNIQUE
SHE CALLS THE ICE-ICE BABY.
(EMBARRASSING, I KNOW.)
WHEN A KID COMES IN WHO'S
REAL CLOSED OFF, *ICY*, SHE
TELLS AN UGLY A STORY
FROM HER OWN LIFE TO
OPEN HIM UP.



USE ICE TO
BREAK THE ICE
AND GET TO THE
CRYING BABY
INSIDE. OR YOU
COULD USE
SOMETHING EVEN
COLDER, LIKE
LIQUID NITRO,
WHICH...

...IF YOU
MAKE A
FRIEND ON
THE COOK
LINE AT
GOTHAM
SKYLIGHT,
ISN'T
HARD TO
GET.



...ALL RIGHT
THEN, *ICEBERG
LOUNGE*. LET'S SEE
WHAT BIG, UGLY
BABY IS CRYING
INSIDE YOU.



SEE?
I GOT THIS,
RIGHT?



VISUALIZE.
YOU'RE A BIG,
FAT CRIME
LORD.

YOU ARE
NOTORIOUS FOR
GATHERING INFORMATION
ON EVERYONE YOU'RE
SUPPOSED TO MEET WITH,
BEFORE *BURNING* SAID
INFORMATION, AS YOU
KEEP NOTHING ON
COMPUTERS BATMAN
COULD ACCESS.

BUT *BLOOM*
PUT YOU IN THE
HOSPITAL BEFORE
YOU WOULD HAVE
HAD A CHANCE TO
TORCH THEM...
WHERE...WHERE...
WHERE...

Huh.

AND JUST LIKE THAT,
THINGS GO
BACK FROM
COLD...TO
HOT.

WHAT
THE...

"YOU HAVE TO
BE KIDDING."



BATMAN WAS HUMAN. HE HAD NO POWERS. HE STOOD NEXT TO *GODS* AND SAID, "I HANDLE MY CITY."

HE WAS THE START OF SOMETHING, AND THESE SUITS ARE THE CONTINUATION. THEY'RE A WAY OF SAYING THAT WE CAN BE OUR *OWN* SUPERHEROES.

AND YES, WE RALLY PEOPLE UNDER THE SYMBOLS THEY'VE LEARNED TO TAKE FAITH IN, BUT WE *RECLAIM* RESPONSIBILITY FOR OURSELVES. THAT'S BATMAN'S LEGACY.



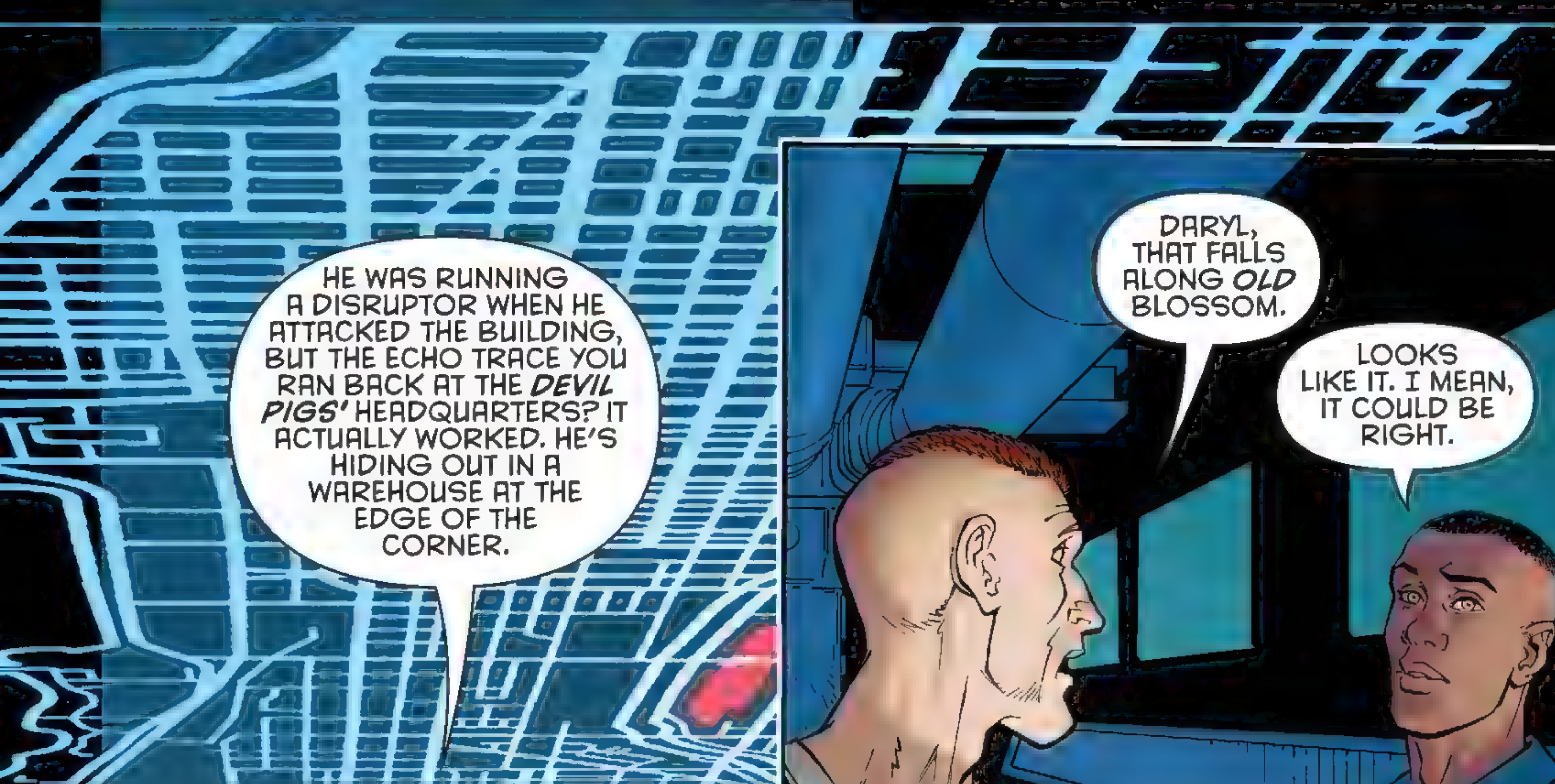


WE HANDLE OUR CITY, JIM. WE USE THESE TO GO INTO THE NARROWS. A SURGICAL *POLICE STRIKE*, AND WE GET BLOOM. YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT HIM. WE NEED TO TAKE HIM OUT.



AGREED, BUT NOT LIKE THIS. NOT BY UNLEASHING *BATZILLA* ON THE CITY. BESIDES, WE STILL DON'T KNOW *WHERE* BLOOM IS.

BUT WE *DO* KNOW.



HE WAS RUNNING A DISRUPTOR WHEN HE ATTACKED THE BUILDING, BUT THE ECHO TRACE YOU RAN BACK AT THE *DEVIL PIGS'* HEADQUARTERS? IT ACTUALLY WORKED. HE'S HIDING OUT IN A WAREHOUSE AT THE EDGE OF THE CORNER.

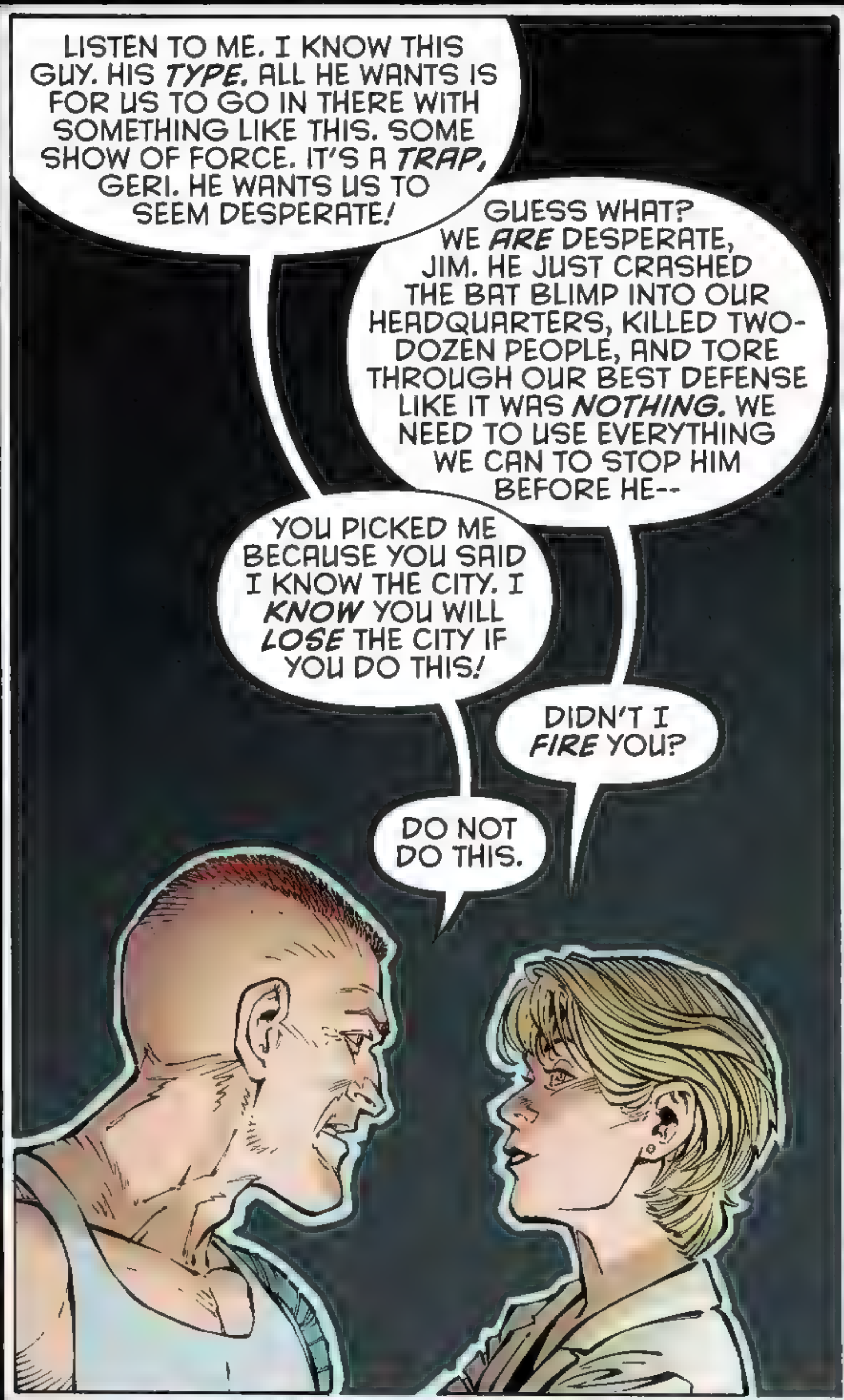


DARYL, THAT FALLS ALONG *OLD BLOSSOM*.

LOOKS LIKE IT. I MEAN, IT COULD BE RIGHT.



SO WE GO IN CAREFULLY, BUT WITH EVERYTHING, AND WE SHOW PEOPLE WE CAN DO THIS. THIS CAN WORK.



LISTEN TO ME. I KNOW THIS GUY. HIS *TYPE*. ALL HE WANTS IS FOR US TO GO IN THERE WITH SOMETHING LIKE THIS. SOME SHOW OF FORCE. IT'S A *TRAP*, GERI. HE WANTS US TO SEEM DESPERATE!

GUESS WHAT? WE *ARE* DESPERATE, JIM. HE JUST CRASHED THE BAT BLIMP INTO OUR HEADQUARTERS, KILLED TWO-DOZEN PEOPLE, AND TORE THROUGH OUR BEST DEFENSE LIKE IT WAS *NOTHING*. WE NEED TO USE EVERYTHING WE CAN TO STOP HIM BEFORE HE--

YOU PICKED ME BECAUSE YOU SAID I KNOW THE CITY. I *KNOW* YOU WILL *LOSE* THE CITY IF YOU DO THIS!

DIDN'T I *FIRE* YOU?

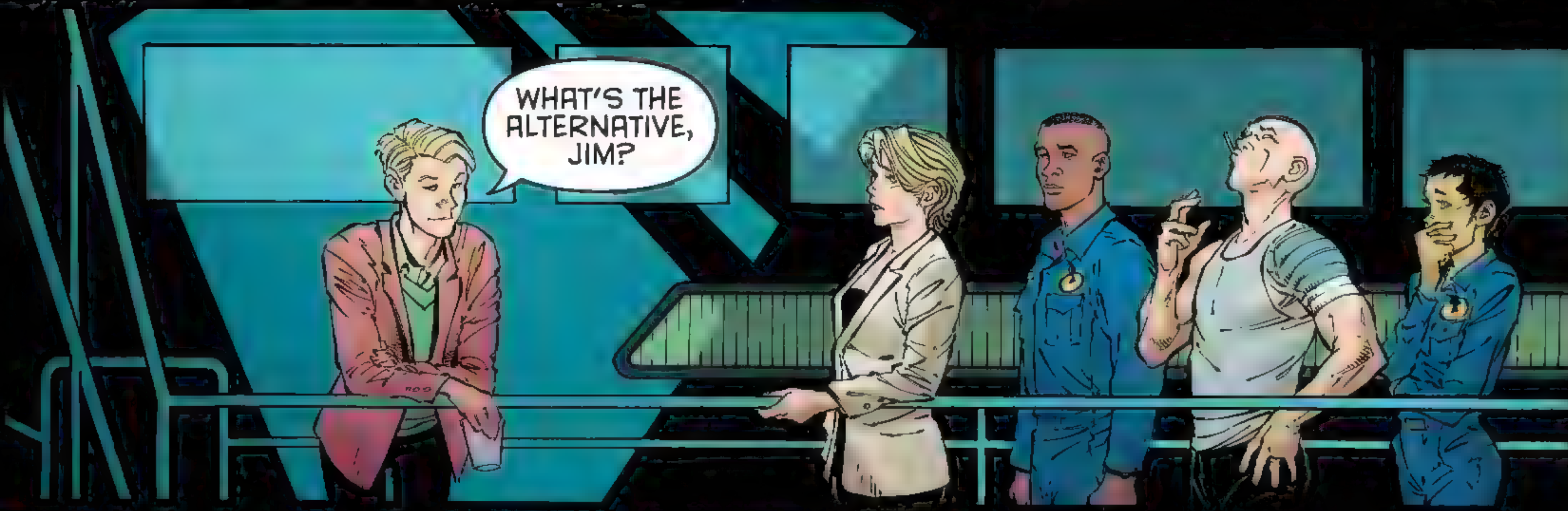
DO NOT DO THIS.



JIM'S RIGHT, MISS POWERS. I LIVE IN THE *CORNER*, AND PEOPLE RIGHT NOW, AFTER JOKER'S ATTACK? THEY'RE SCARED AND ANGRY. ALL OF THE NARROWS IS, AND ALL IT'D TAKE IS A *PUSH* FROM BLOOM. SOME TRICK, TO BRING THE WHOLE THING DOWN.



COMMISSIONER SAWYER. IT'S YOUR FORCE. I SAY GO USE IT. ARE YOU UP FOR IT?



WHAT'S THE *ALTERNATIVE*, JIM?



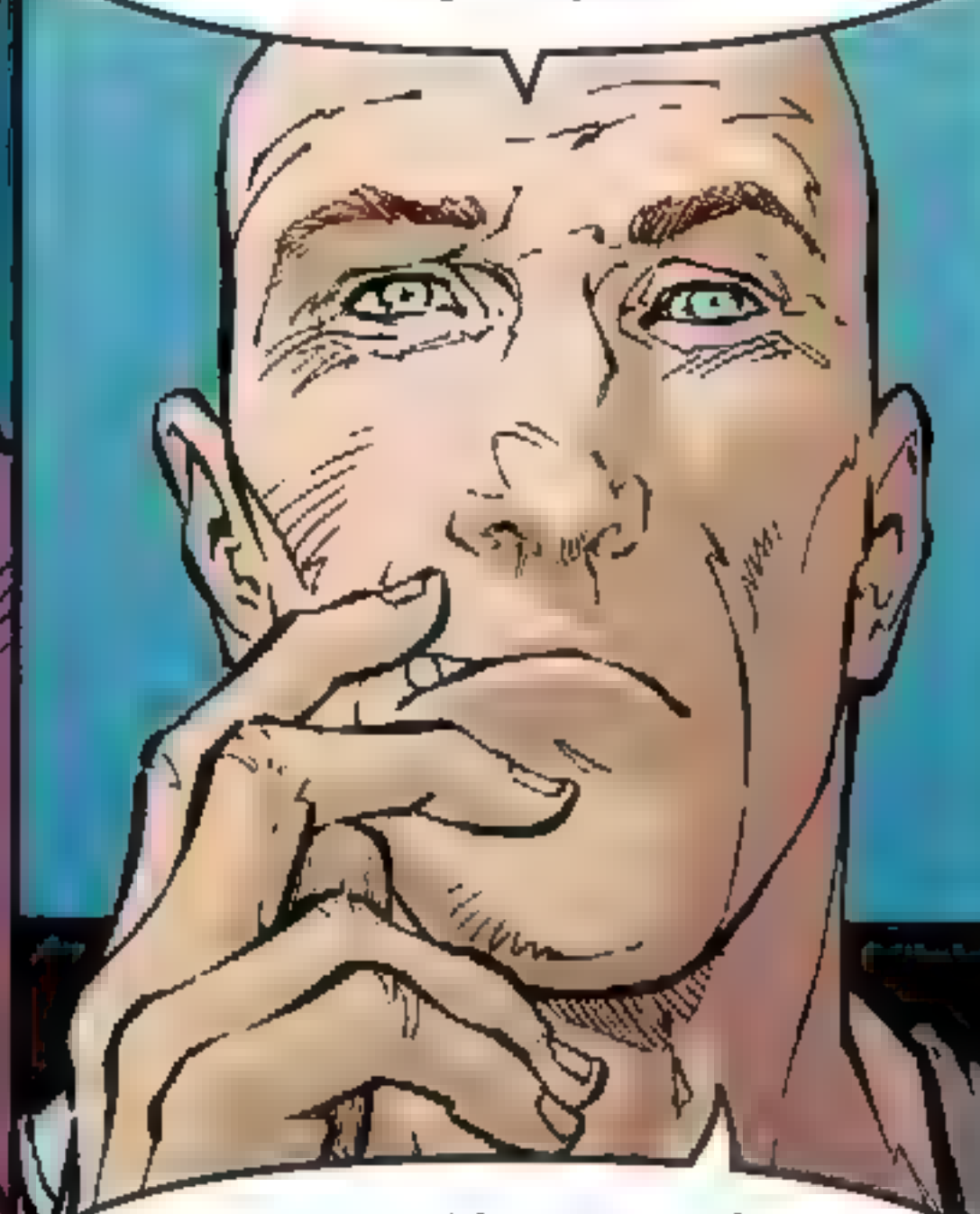
LET ME GO IN. *ALONE*.

YOU'RE KIDDING. HE'LL *DESTROY* YOU.

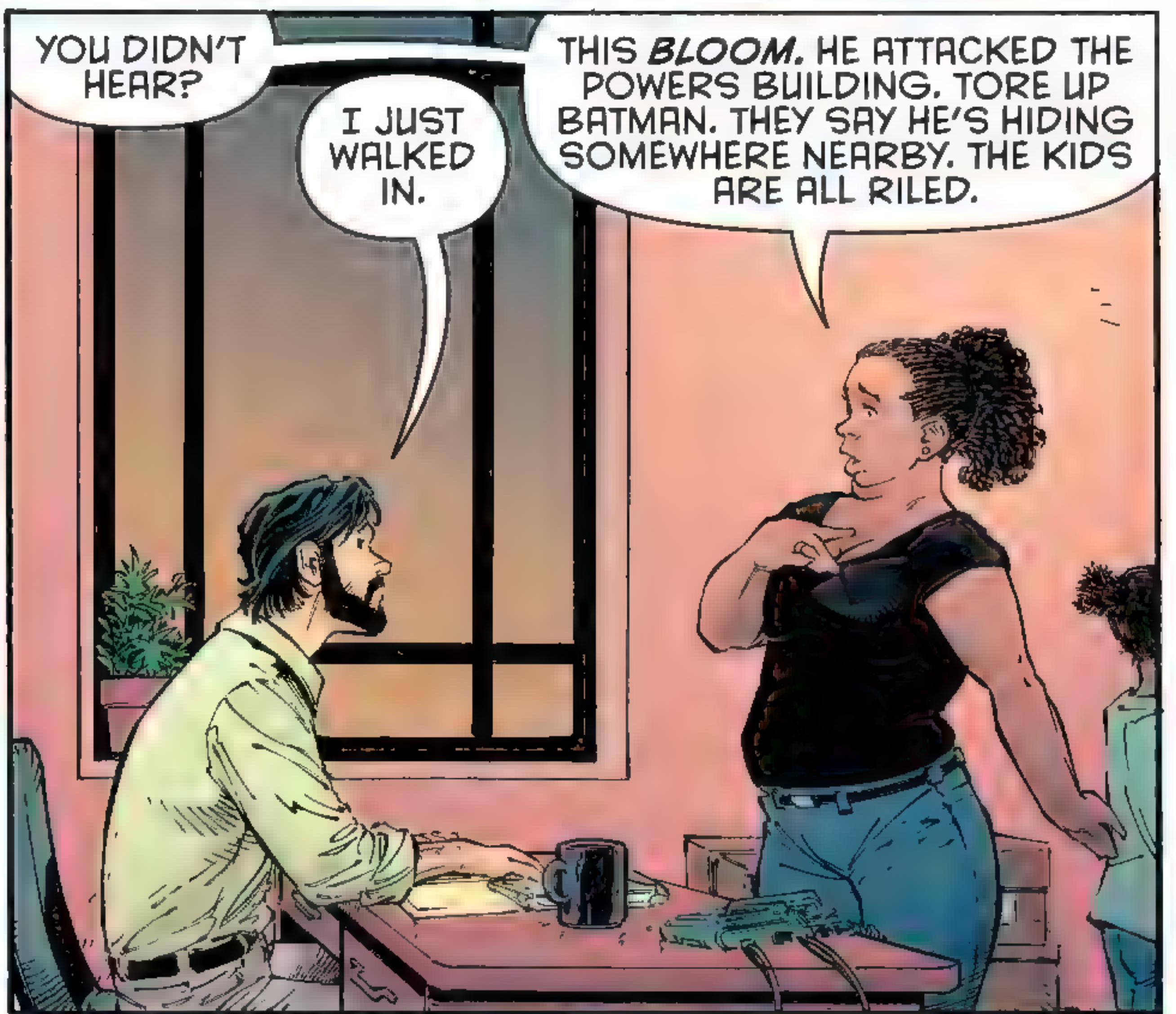
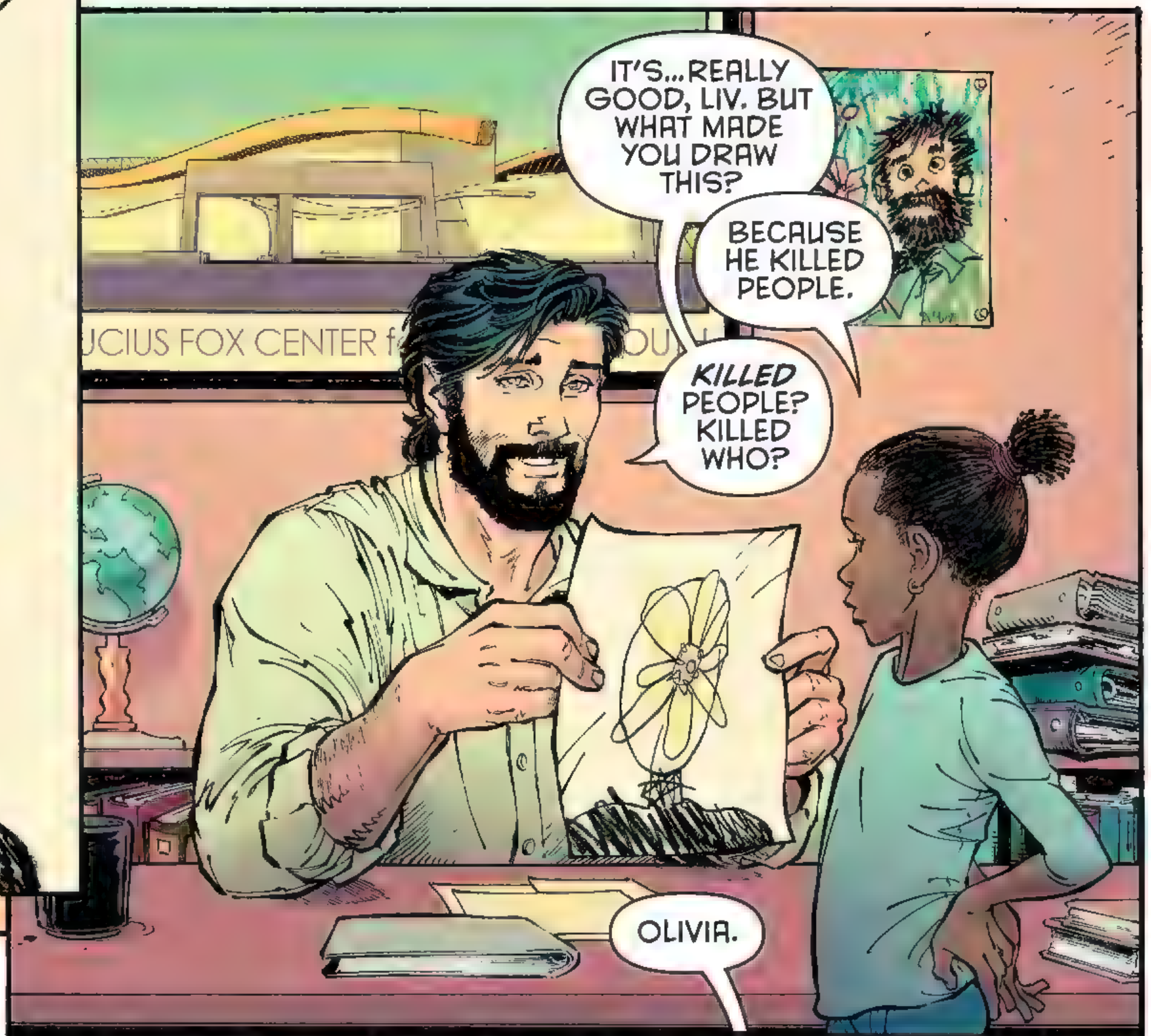
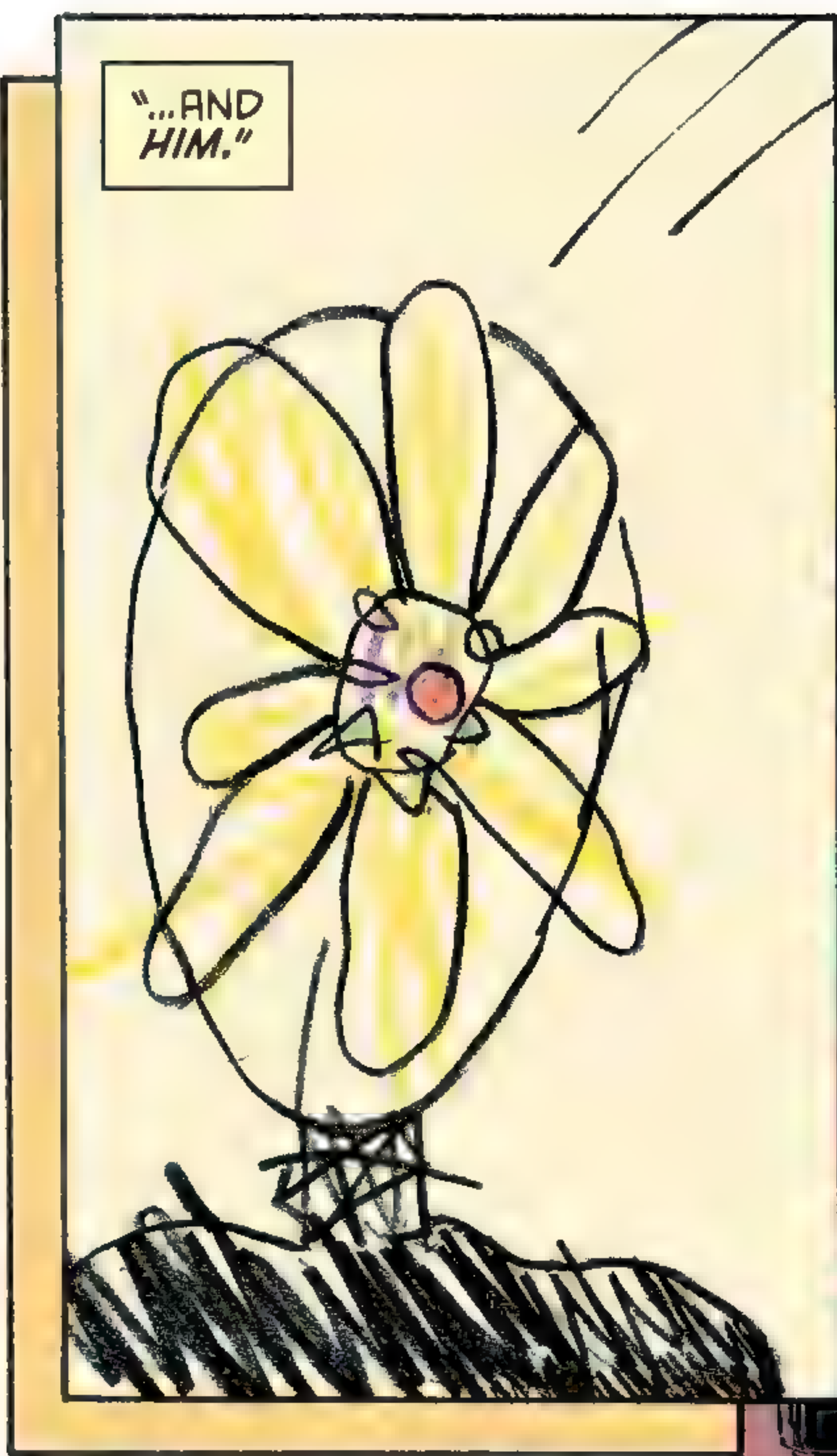
THEN YOU'LL HAVE YOUR *RESIGNATION*.

LISTEN TO ME AND I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I WOULD HAVE TOLD YOUR CROWD AT THAT PARTY.

GIVE ME ONE CHANCE TO GET THIS GUY. *ONE*. IF I FAIL, I'LL DIE. IF I GET HIM, YOU STILL CAN *FIRE* ME. BUT LET ME DO THIS.



IT'S THE RIGHT WAY. NOT AN ARMY, JUST *BATMAN*. JUST ME...

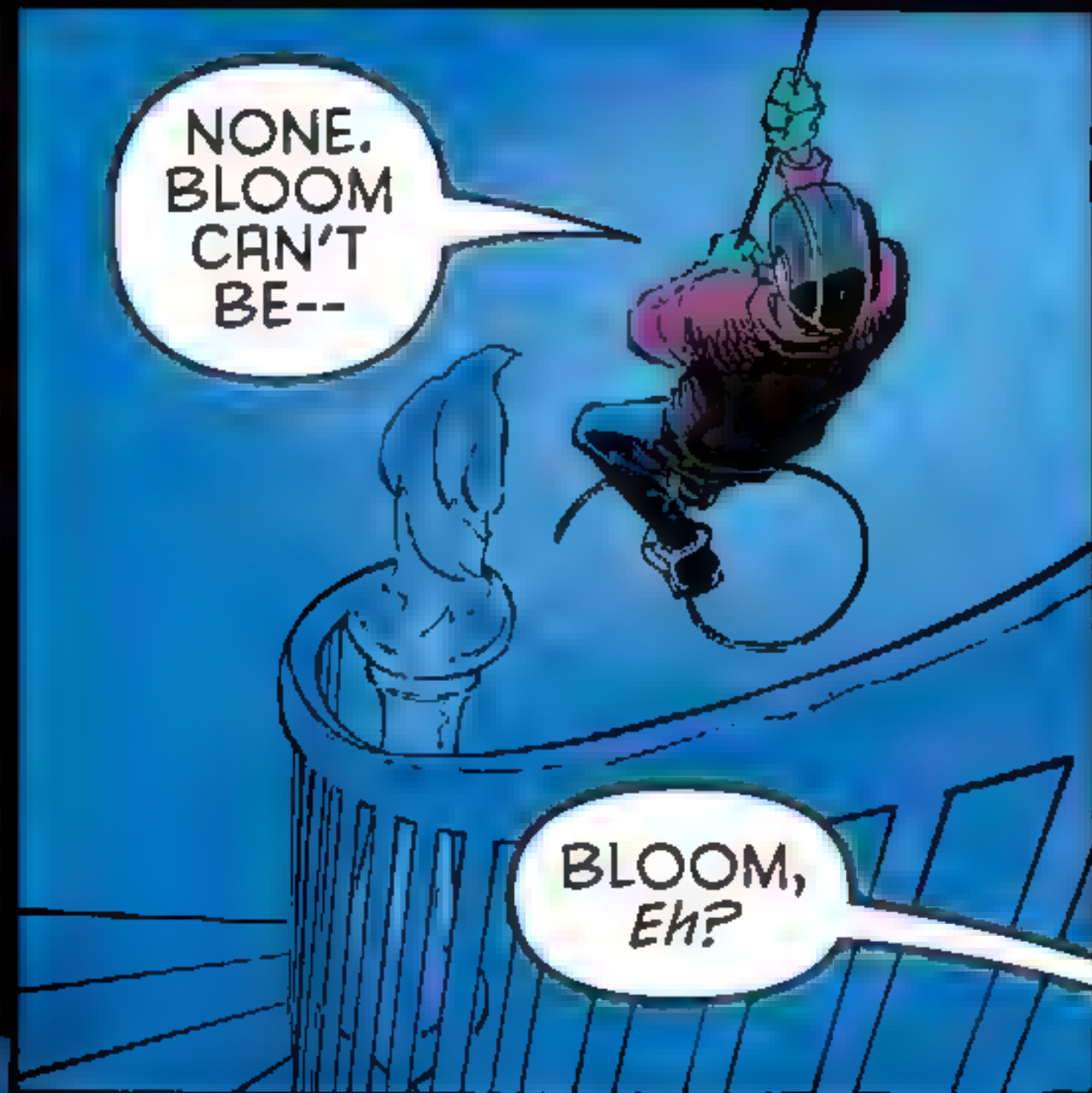




...I
TOOK
WHAT I
CAME
FOR...



...BUT IT
DOESN'T
MAKE ANY
SENSE.



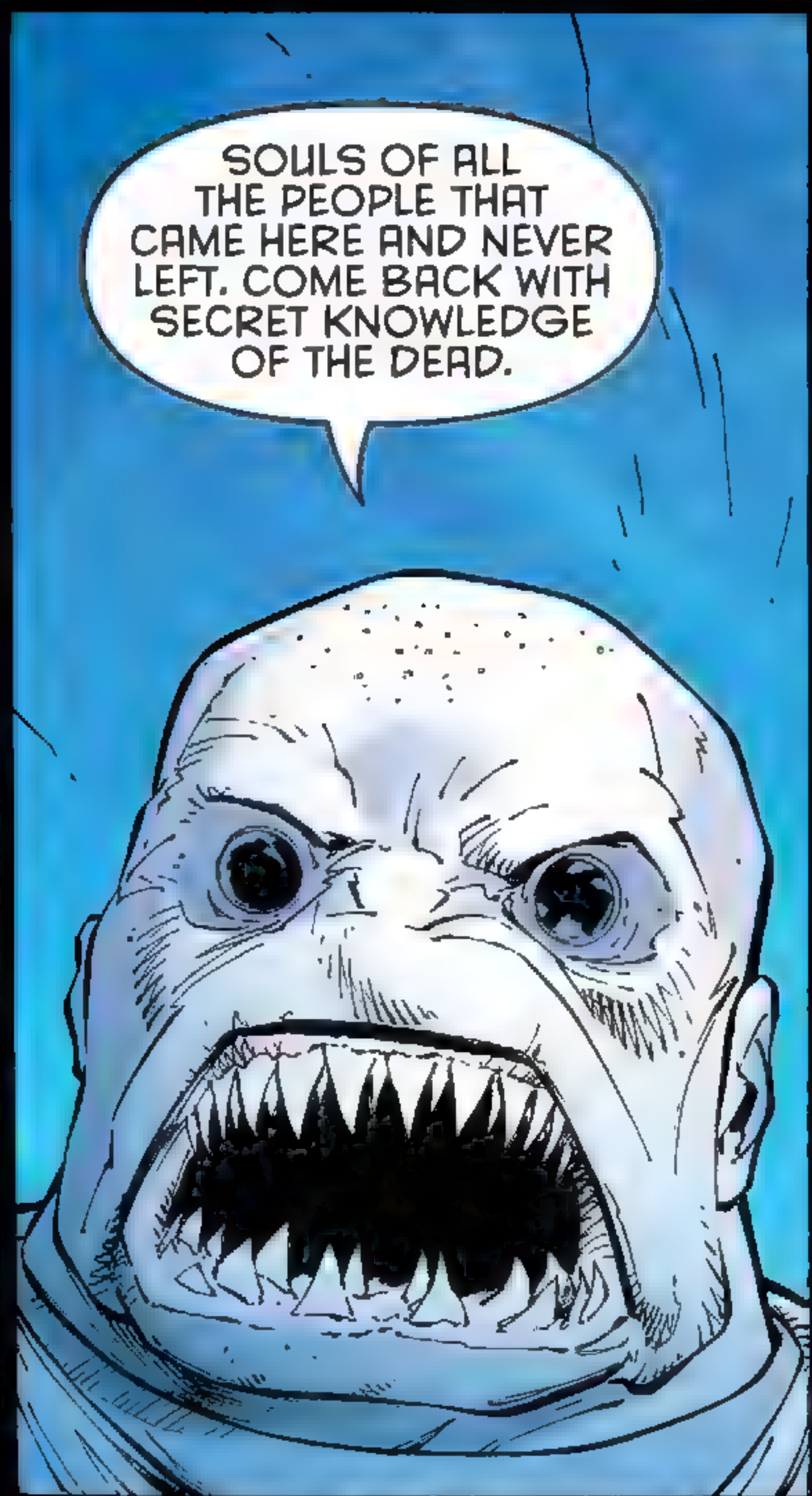
NONE.
BLOOM
CAN'T
BE--

BLOOM,
Eh?



WE WERE JUST
DISCUSSING OUR
FRIEND MISTER BLOOM,
AND WHAT TO DO TO
HIM...BUT LOOK AT THIS.
Heh. SO YOU WANT
TO BE A BIRD,
KID?

YOU KNOW
WHAT THEY SAY
ABOUT THE *BIRDS*
THAT SIT ON THE
ROOF HERE,
eh KID?



SOULS OF ALL
THE PEOPLE THAT
CAME HERE AND NEVER
LEFT. COME BACK WITH
SECRET KNOWLEDGE
OF THE DEAD.



TWEET.
TWEET.

THE *BIRDS*
ARE UP THERE
ON THE ICE BECAUSE
COBBLEPOT HAS THEM
FED THREE TIMES A
DAY TO KEEP THAT
STORY GOING...



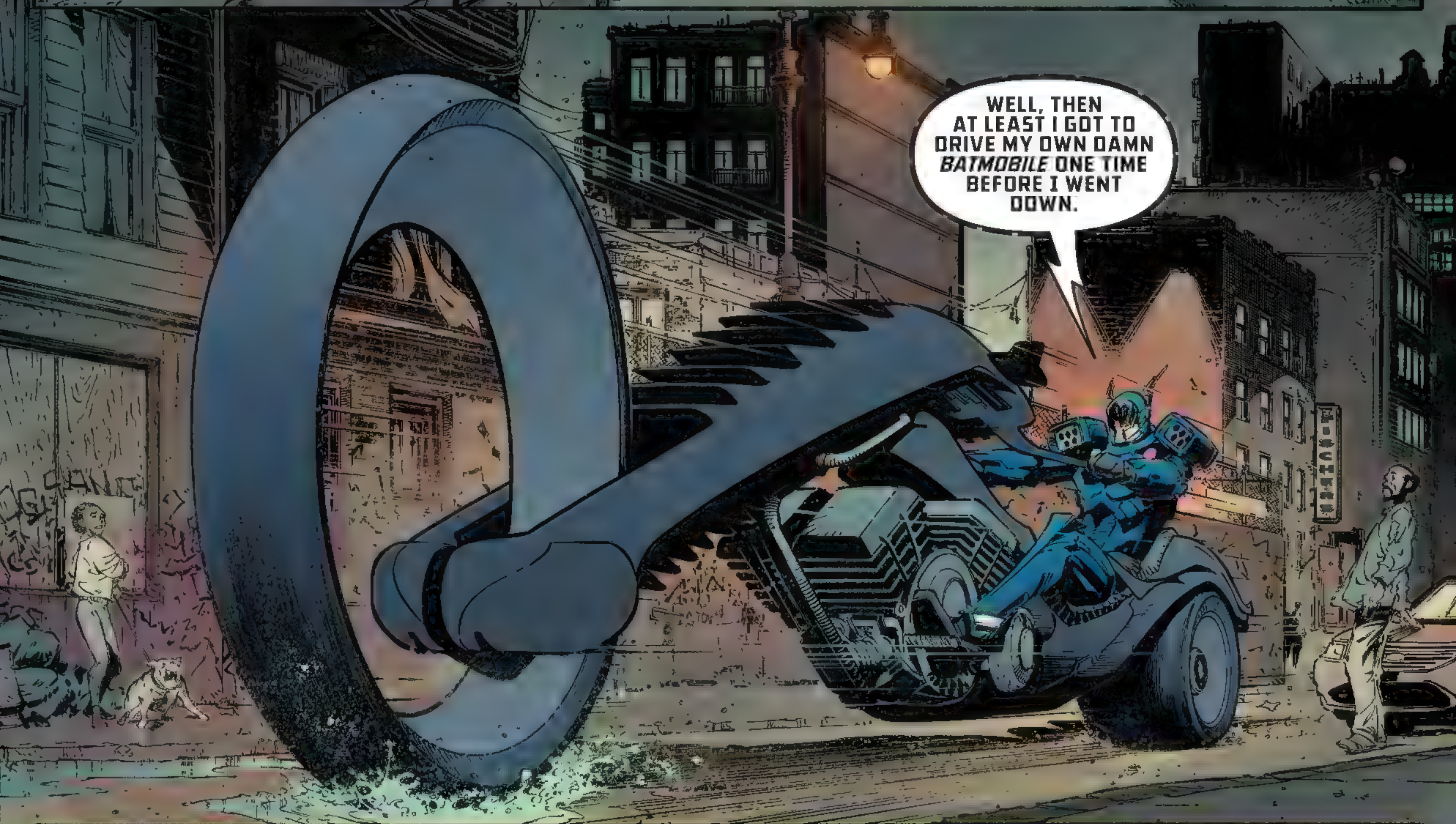
...THEY'RE JUST
BIRDS. THEY EAT,
SLEEP...THEY'RE
AFRAID OF *DEATH*
METAL.





...YOU UNDERSTAND THAT, RIGHT? I MEAN, I GET GOING IN THERE WITHOUT THE OTHER SUITS, BUT EVEN SO, GOING IN ALONE...

...WHO'S TO SAY THIS ISN'T EXACTLY WHAT BLOOM WANTS? WHAT IF THIS IS HIS TRAP?



WELL, THEN AT LEAST I GOT TO DRIVE MY OWN DAMN BATMOBILE ONE TIME BEFORE I WENT DOWN.



BATMAN---

LISTEN TO ME. HE DOESN'T KNOW WE HAVE HIS SIGNATURE PINNED. THE BLOCKER WILL WORK, AND WITHOUT HIS POWERS...

JUST REMEMBER, THE BLOCKER IS EXTREMELY SHORT RANGE. LESS THAN FIFTY METERS.



YOU NEED TO BE RIGHT ON TOP OF BLOOM FOR IT TO BLOCK WHATEVER SEED HE HAS IN HIM. AND YOU NEED TO BE OUT OF THE SUIT FOR IT TO WORK.

AND, IF YOU TURN IT ON TOO EARLY, HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DETECT IT AND COUNTER.

JUST MAKE SURE YOU TAKE YOUR SHOT CAREFULLY. AND REMEMBER, THE SIGNAL WORKS THROUGH THE SUIT'S ANTENNAE.

SEE, I KNEW THESE EARS WERE GOOD FOR SOMETHING.



LOOKS LIKE WE'RE HERE.

I SEE THE SAME. I HAVE NO NAME ON THE STREET, THOUGH. NO MENTION OF "BLOSSOM ROW," AS YOU CALLED IT.



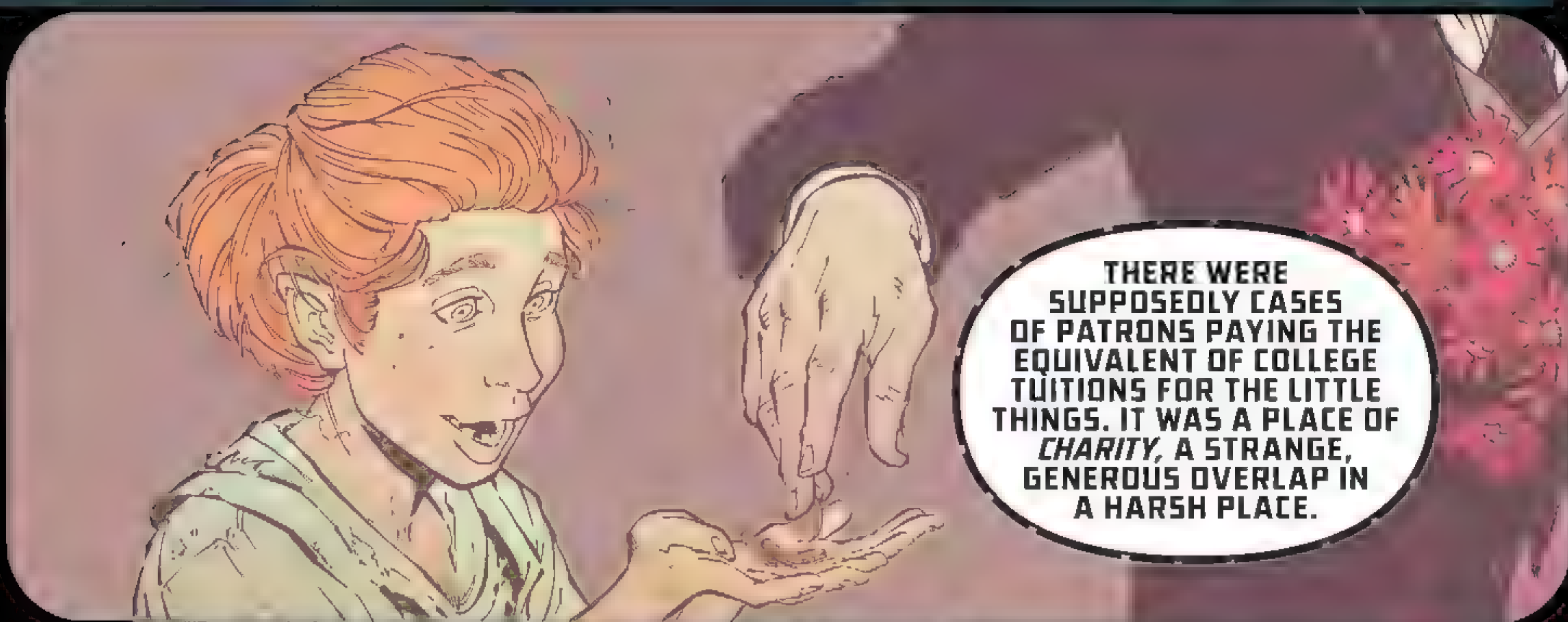
THAT'S BECAUSE IT DOESN'T *EXIST*. IT NEVER DID, REALLY. IT WAS THE COMMON NAME FOR A *FOOTPATH* THAT RAN EAST TO WEST ACROSS THE CITY THROUGHOUT THE 19TH CENTURY.

IT MARKED THE *BORDER* BETWEEN THE FARMLAND AND RICH ESTATES AT THE CITY'S NORTH END, AND THE WORKING CITY TO THE SOUTH.



THIS AREA, WITH ITS WATERWAYS, THE *NARROWS*, IT SITS AT THAT INTERSECTION. BLOSSOM ROW CUT RIGHT THROUGH. A KIND OF PROMENADE.

WEALTHY GOTHAMITES WOULD COME DOWN AND BUY LITTLE FIGURES MADE OF *FLOWERS* BY WORKING CHILDREN FOR FAR MORE THAN THEY WERE WORTH.



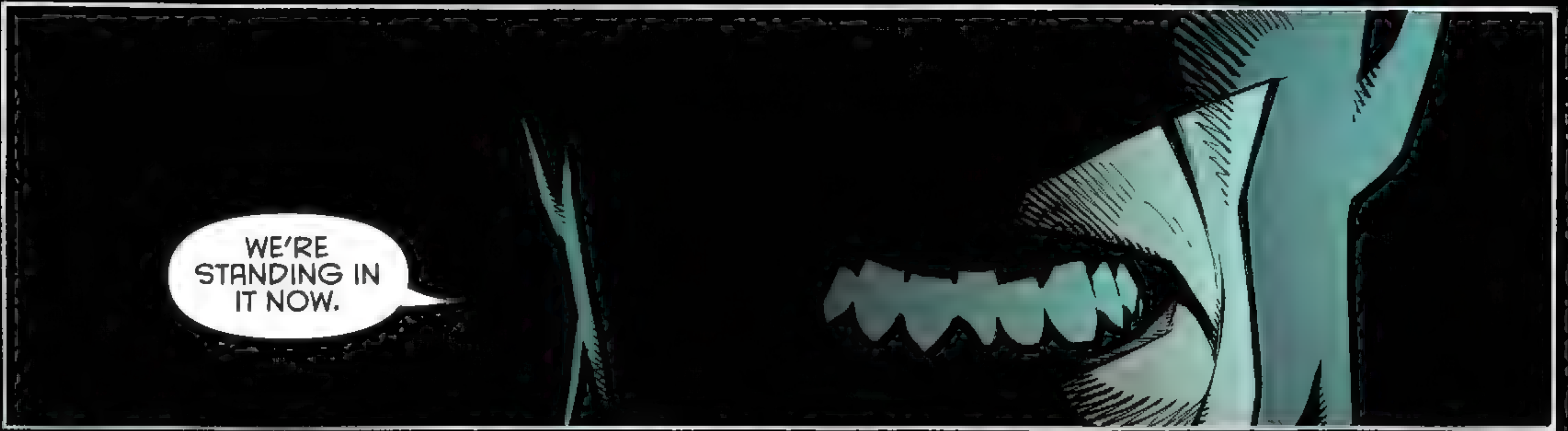
THERE WERE SUPPOSEDLY CASES OF PATRONS PAYING THE EQUIVALENT OF COLLEGE TUITIONS FOR THE LITTLE THINGS. IT WAS A PLACE OF *CHARITY*, A STRANGE, GENEROUS OVERLAP IN A HARSH PLACE.

AS THE CITY GREW, THE PATHWAY VANISHED. FORGOTTEN, MOSTLY.

I'LL ADMIT, I WAS EXPECTING MORE HORROR FROM THAT ONE, BATMAN, BEING THIS IS GOTHAM.

WHERE'S THE DARKNESS IN THAT STORY?





WE'RE
STANDING IN
IT NOW.

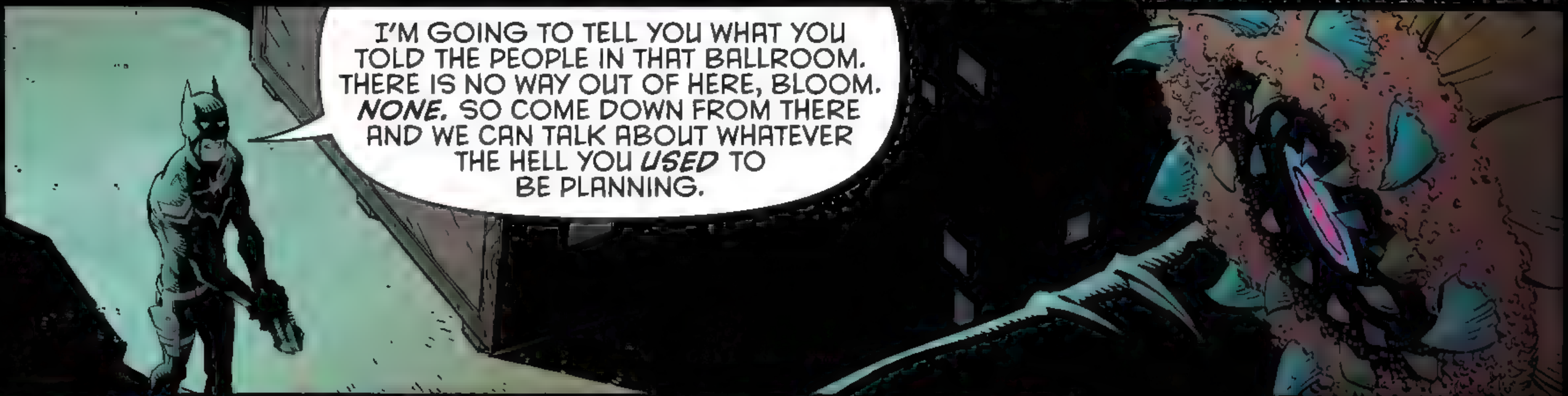


Right
here.



YOU SOUND
DIFFERENT,
BLOOM. YOUR
VOICE. WHERE'S
ALL THE GRAND-
STANDING?

That was just
for show. This is for
real. Come here, jim. Sit
with me a moment before it
all changes out there. It's
going to look so different,
soon. I almost miss
this already.



I'M GOING TO TELL YOU WHAT YOU
TOLD THE PEOPLE IN THAT BALLROOM.
THERE IS NO WAY OUT OF HERE, BLOOM.
NONE. SO COME DOWN FROM THERE
AND WE CAN TALK ABOUT WHATEVER
THE HELL YOU *USED* TO
BE PLANNING.



ALL RIGHT, THEN.
ROOKIE, BLOCKER
ON. TIME TO GET
THE BAD GUY.



ROOKIE?



You
heard him,
"Rookie"...

...TIME
TO GET THE
BAD GUY.

SUPERHEAVY

PART SIX

AND
BREAK HIS
LITTLE
NECK.

SCOTT SNYDER **WRITER** GREG CAPULLO **PENCILS**
DANNY MIKI **INKS** FCO PLASCENCIA **COLORS** STEVE WARREN **LETTERS**
CAPULLO, MIKI, PLASCENCIA **COVER**
TONY DANIEL **WITH** TOMBU MOREY AND SPIKE BRADOT **LOONEY TUNES VARIANT COVER**
REBECCA TAYLOR **ASSOCIATE EDITOR** MARK DOYLE **EDITOR**
BATMAN **CREATED BY** BOB KANE **WITH** BILL FINGER



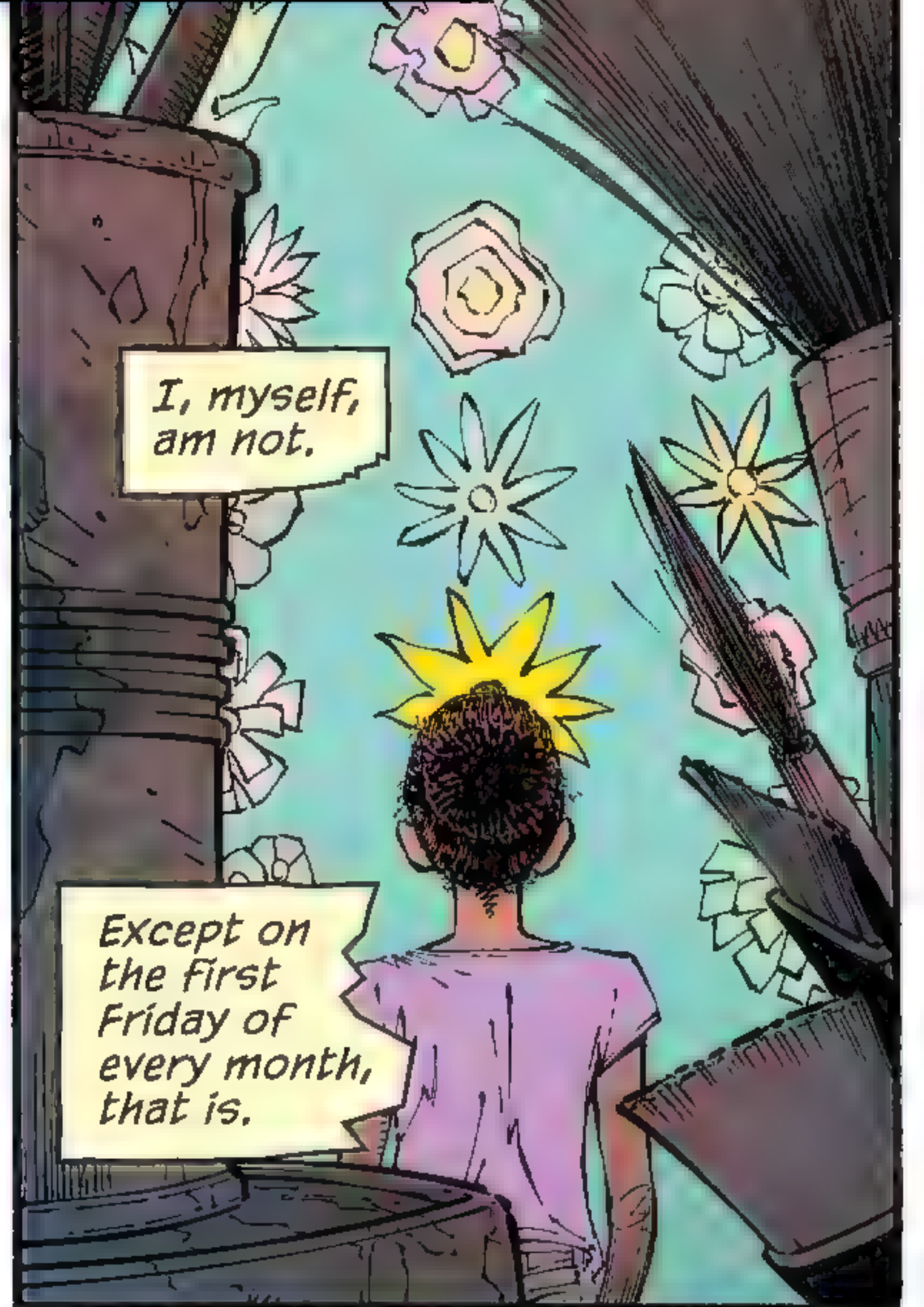
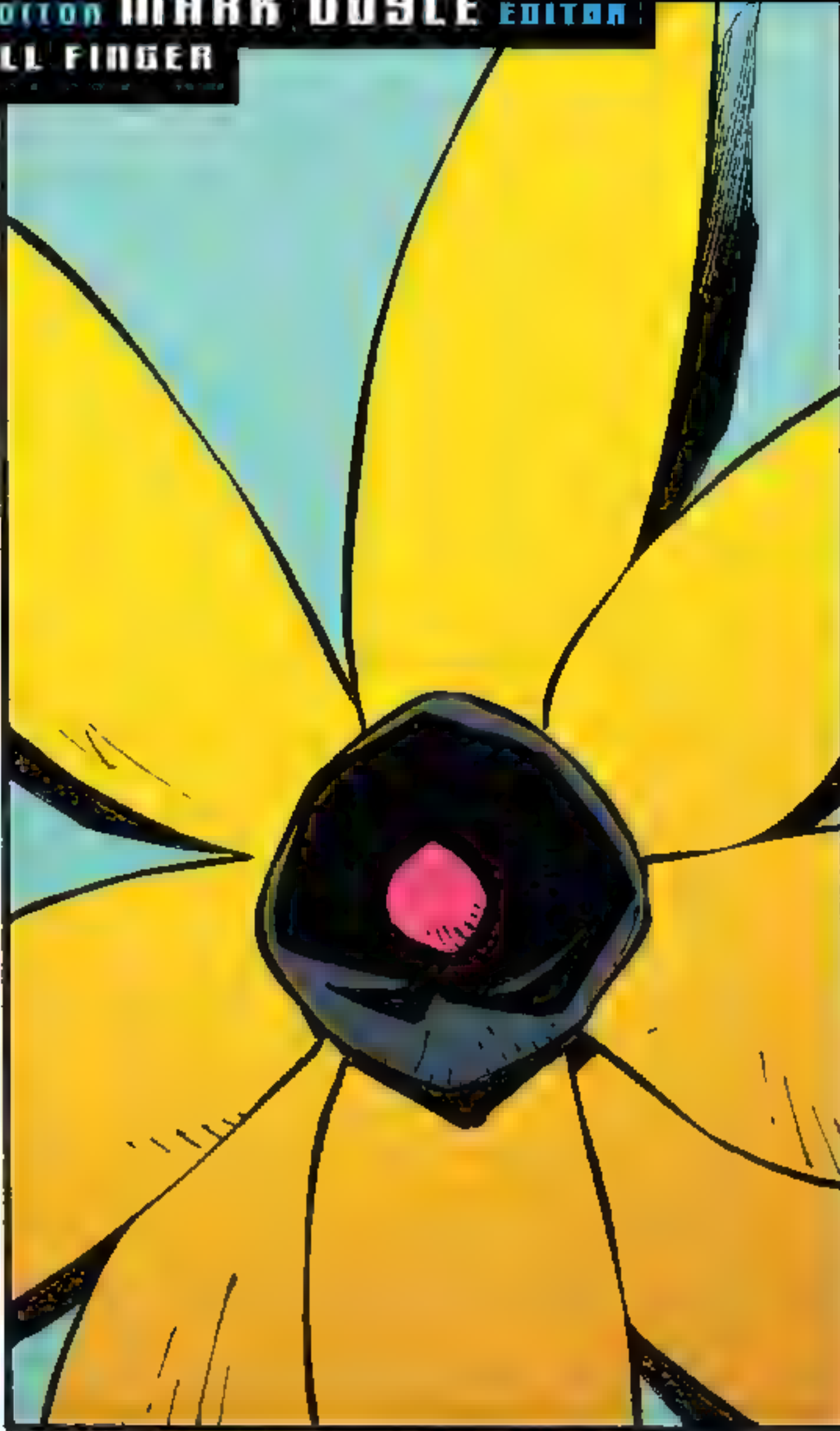
SUPERHEAVY

PART SEVEN

SCOTT SNYDER WRITER GREG CAPULLO PENCILS
DANNY MIKI INKS FCO PLASCENCIA COLORS STEVE WANDS LETTERS
CAPULLO, MIKI, PLASCENCIA COVER ALEX ROSS HARLEY'S LITTLE BLACK BOOK VARIANT COVER
REBECCA TAYLOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR MARK DOYLE EDITOR
BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER



Are you a gambler?



I, myself, am not.

Except on the first Friday of every month, that is.

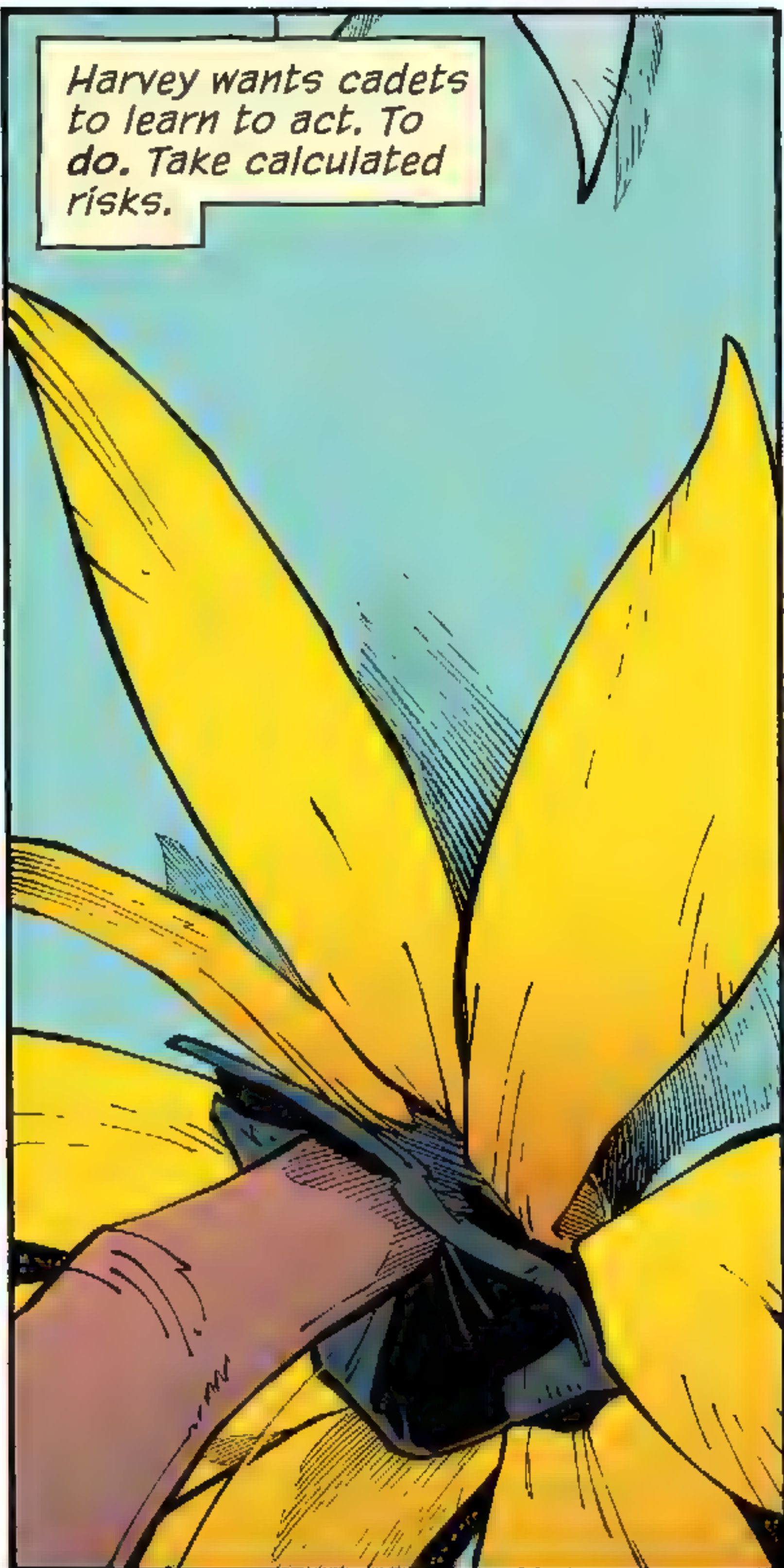


That's when Harvey--Lieutenant Bullock--organizes a game night at his place for the cadets.

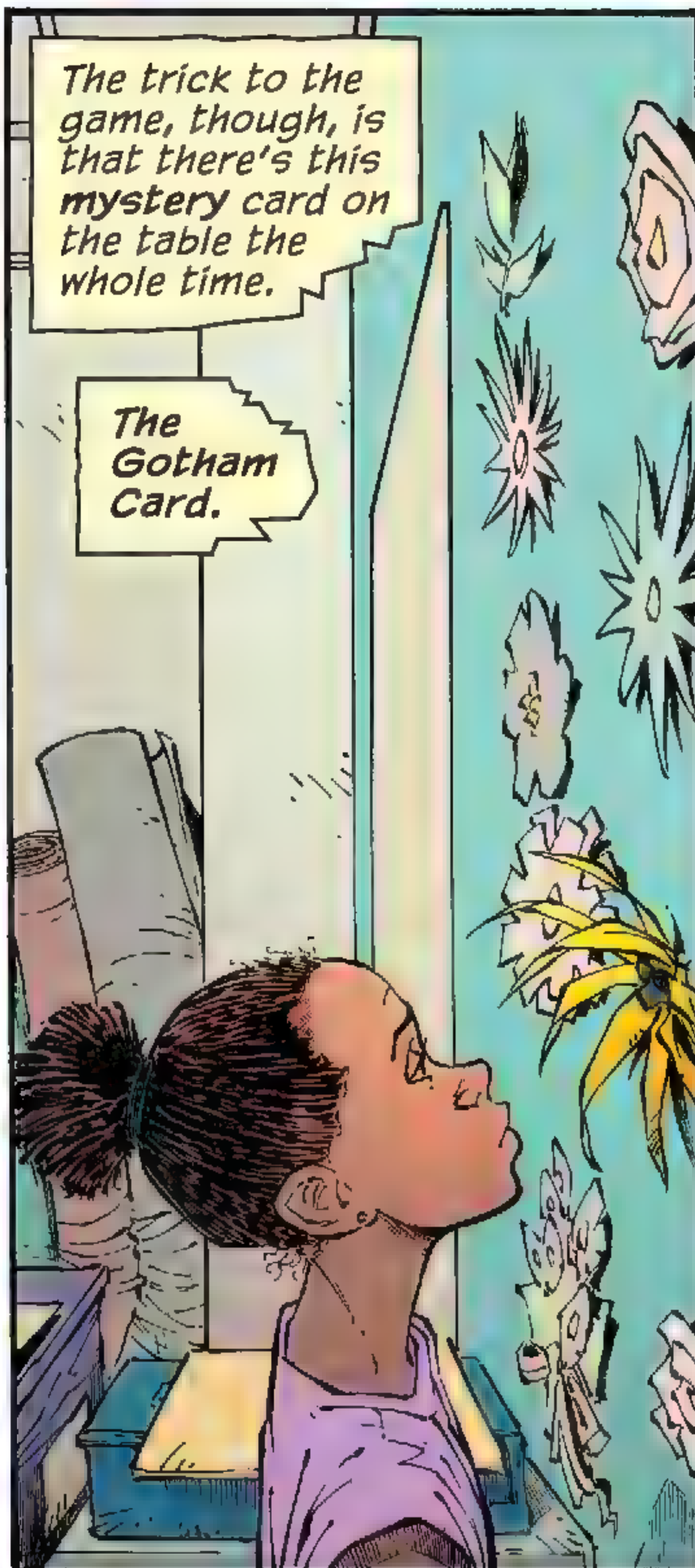
The game we play is Harv's own invention. He calls it, affectionately, "GCPD." For "Gotham Card Played Down."

It's basically poker, but with one, small twist.

The whole game is meant to be played aggressively. Fast as you can go.



Harvey wants cadets to learn to act. To do. Take calculated risks.



The trick to the game, though, is that there's this **mystery card** on the table the whole time.

The **Gotham Card**.



It just sits there, face down, ominously.

Waiting to be revealed...

...and to
change the
game.

⇒Unh⇒
IT'S ME!
PLEASE...
STOP!

IT'S NO USE! BLOOM
PUT A TRANSMITTER INSIDE
THE SUIT! HE MUST HAVE DONE
IT BACK AT THE BALLROOM! THE
SUIT IS TRYING TO RESIST, BUT
IT'LL BE OVERRIDDEN IN
SECONDS...YOU
HAVE TO--

ROOKIE!
⇒Agh⇒ ROOKIE,
I'M YOUR
PARTNER! LET
ME GO!

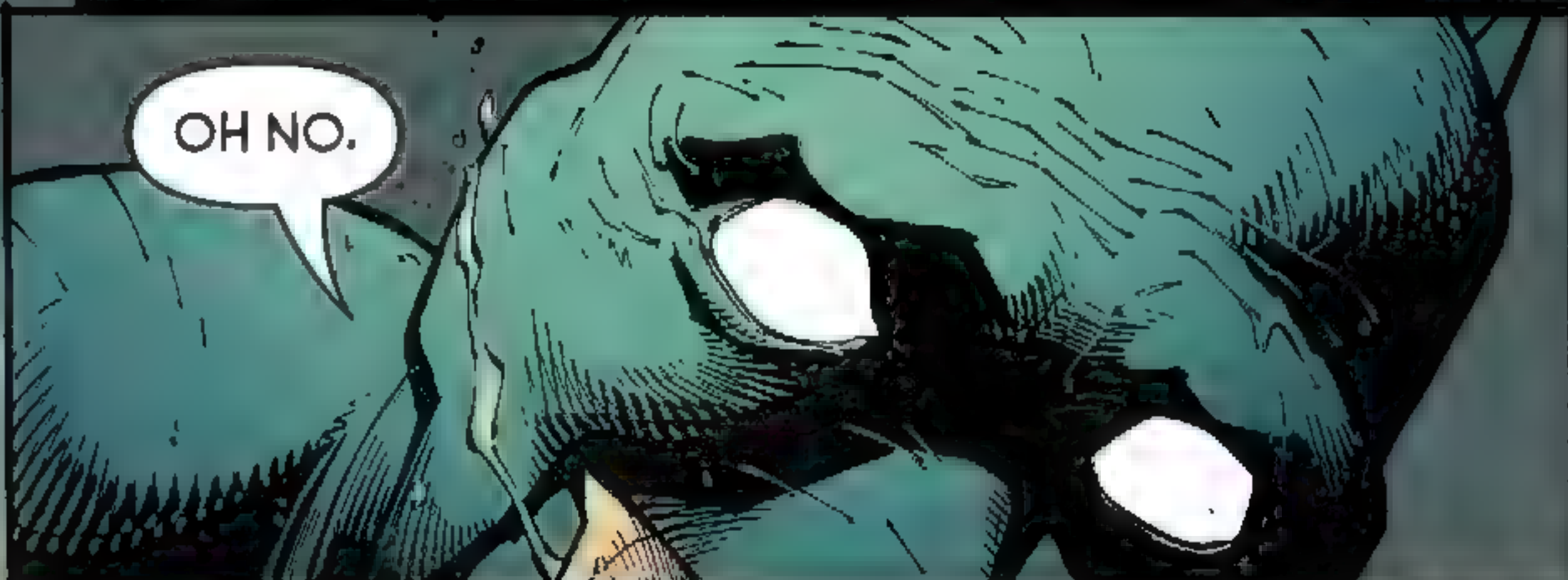
YOU HEARD
HIM...LET
HIM GO.





...blender?

News choppers.
Must have
followed you
for the story.



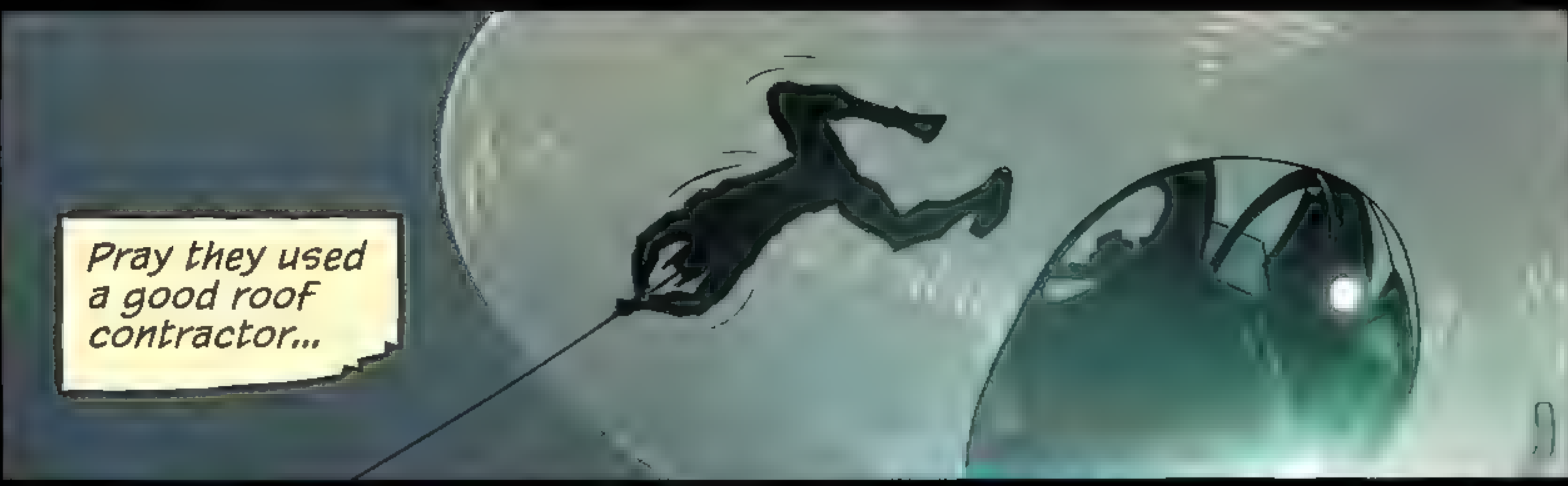
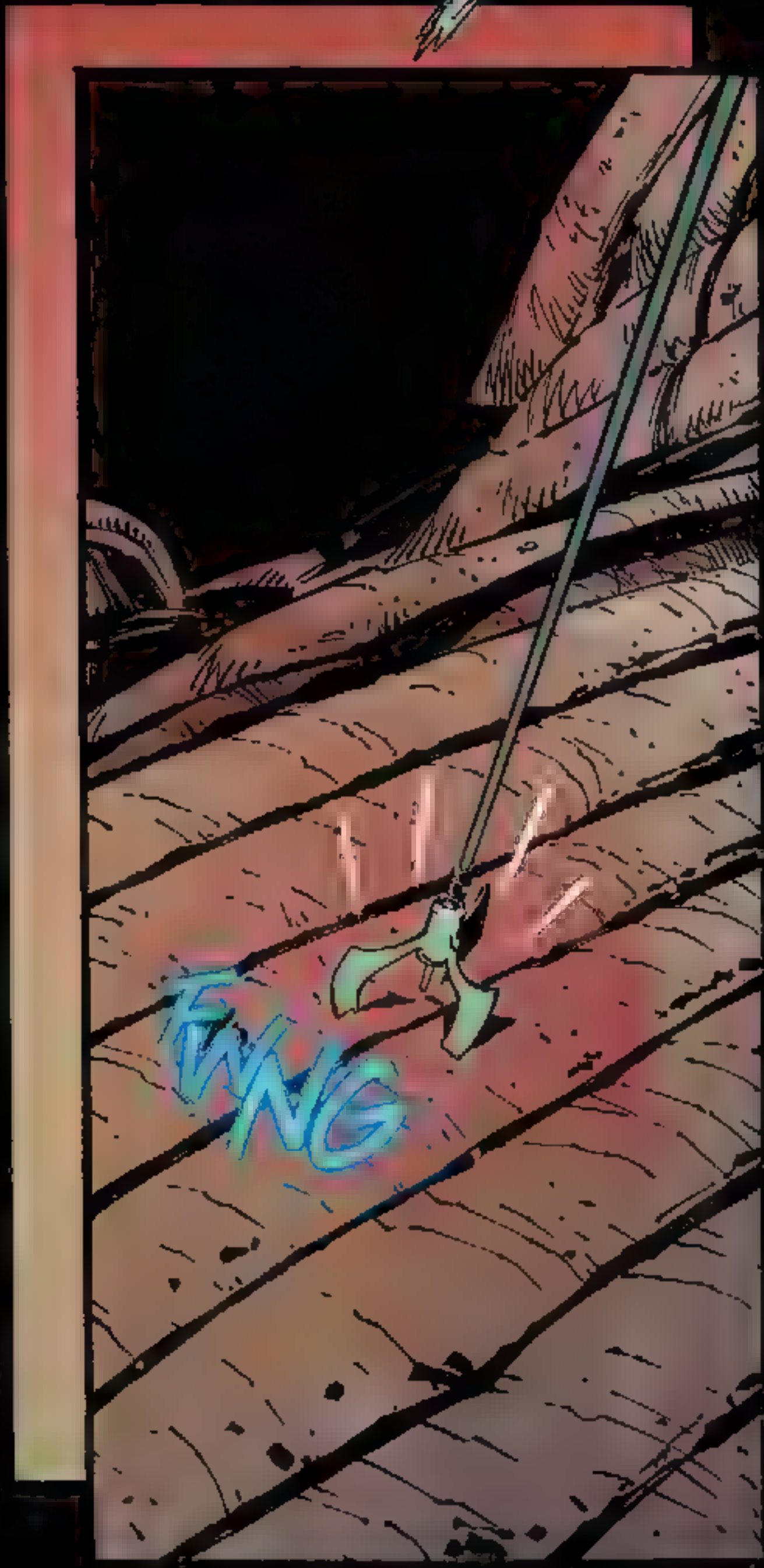
OH NO.



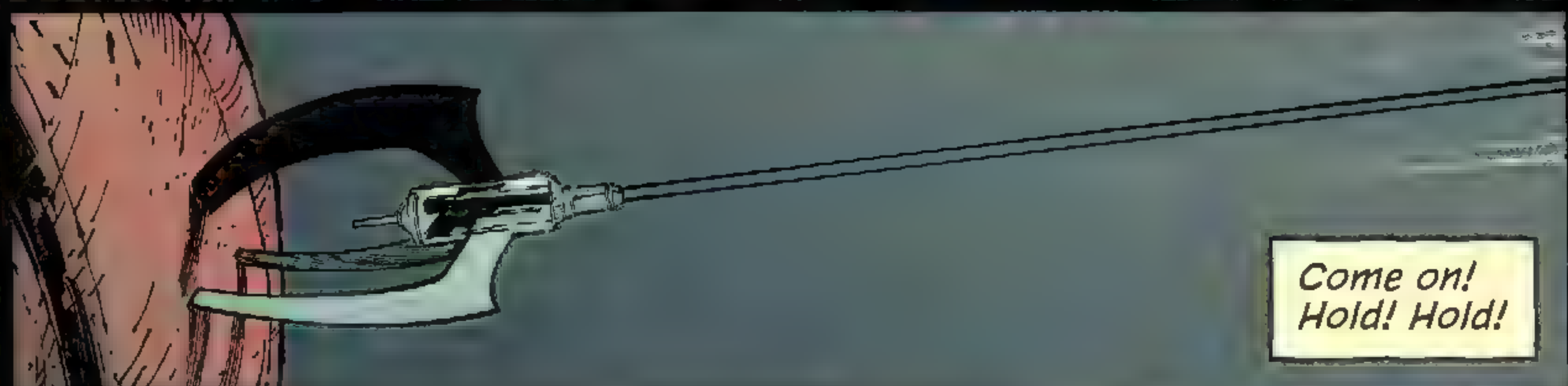
Wave to the camera
before you're
bat-salad.



Do not become
bat-salad.



Pray they used
a good roof
contractor...

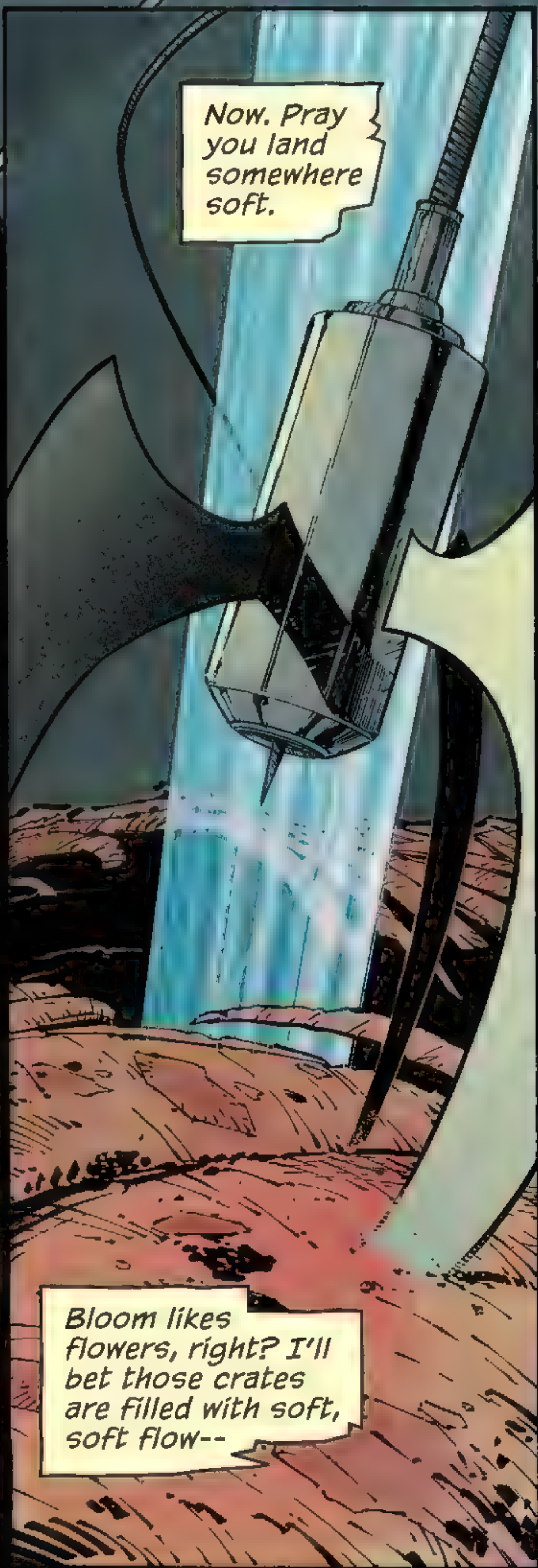


Come on!
Hold! Hold!





→Sigh→
Thank you,
bat-gods.



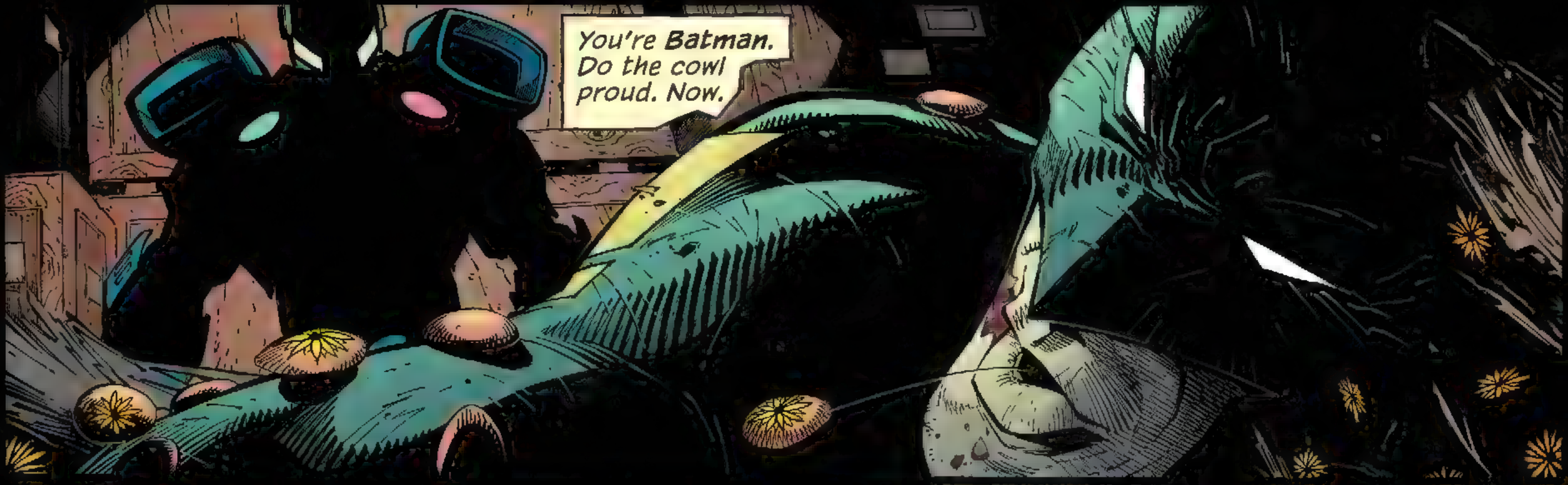
Now. Pray
you land
somewhere
soft.

Bloom likes
flowers, right? I'll
bet those crates
are filled with soft,
soft flow--

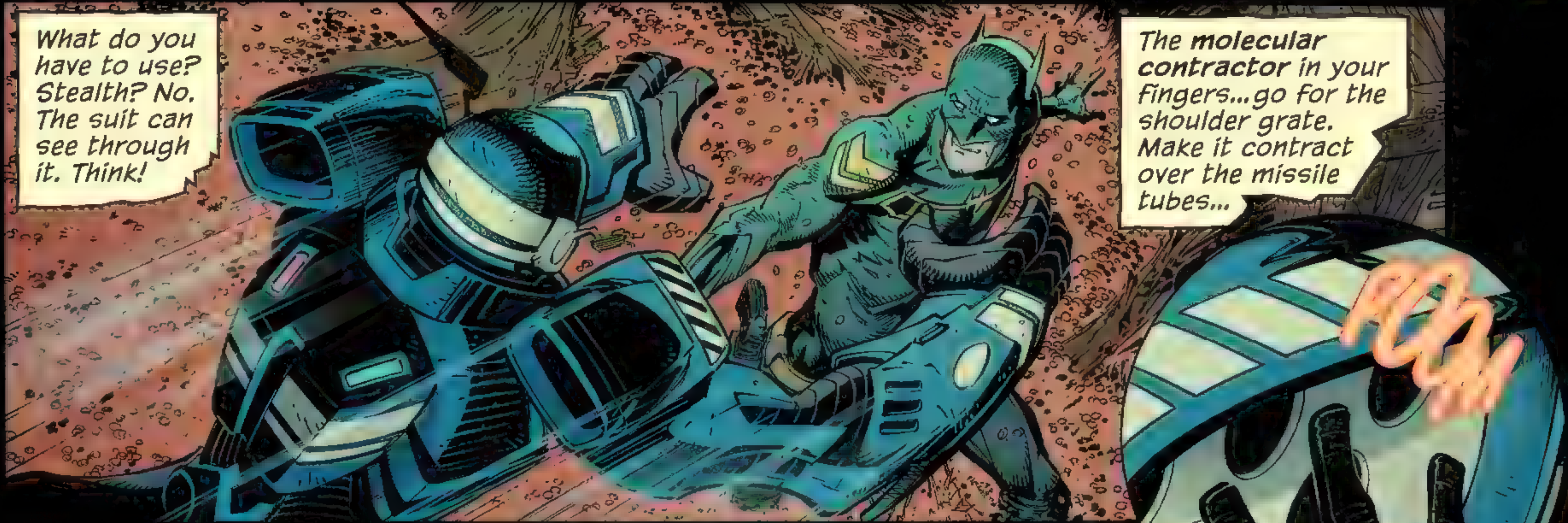


All right.
Enough.

This is it. Play
aggressive,
fast as you
can go, or
you're done.
Make your
move.

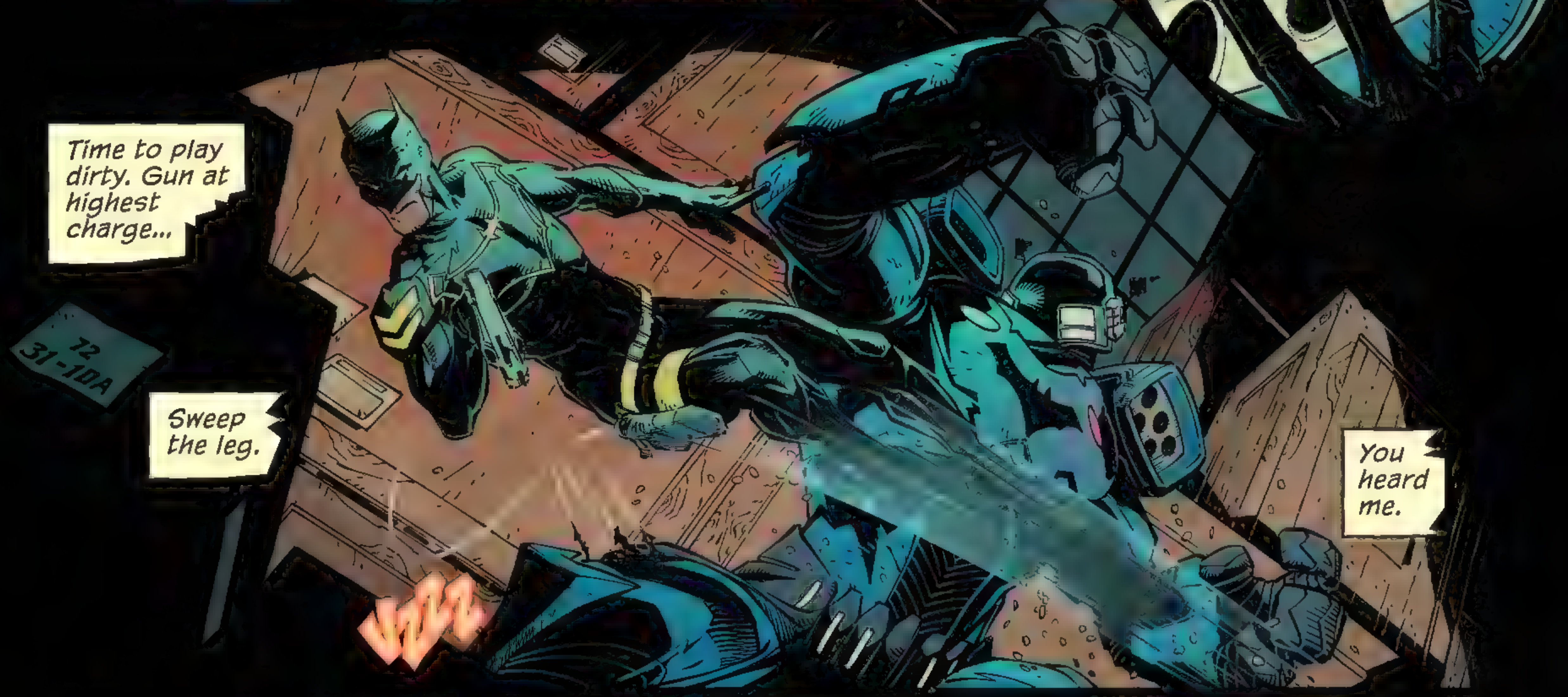


You're Batman.
Do the cowl
proud. Now.



What do you
have to use?
Stealth? No.
The suit can
see through
it. Think!

The molecular
contractor in your
fingers...go for the
shoulder grate.
Make it contract
over the missile
tubes...



Time to play
dirty. Gun at
highest
charge...

Sweep
the leg.

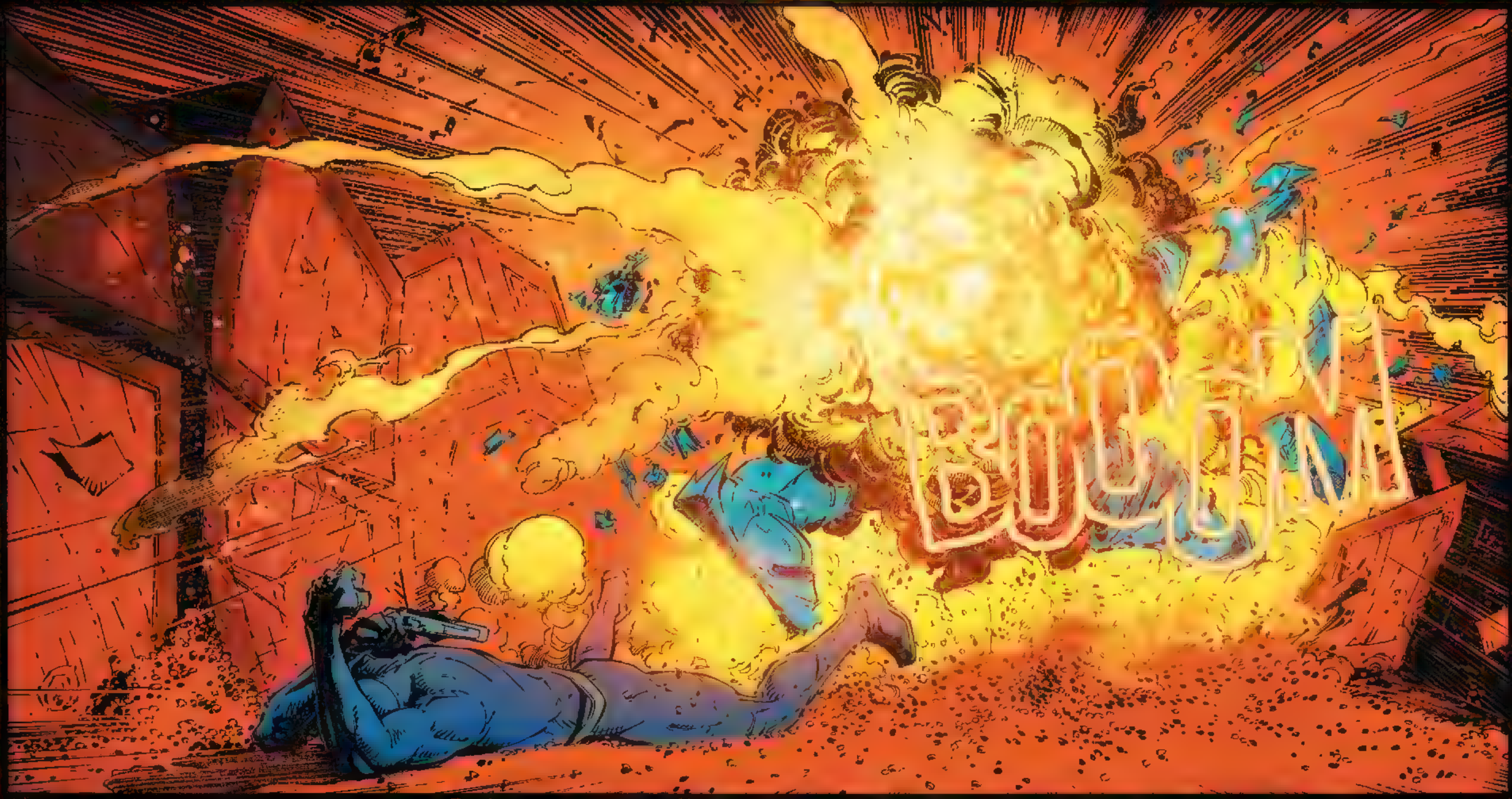
You
heard
me.

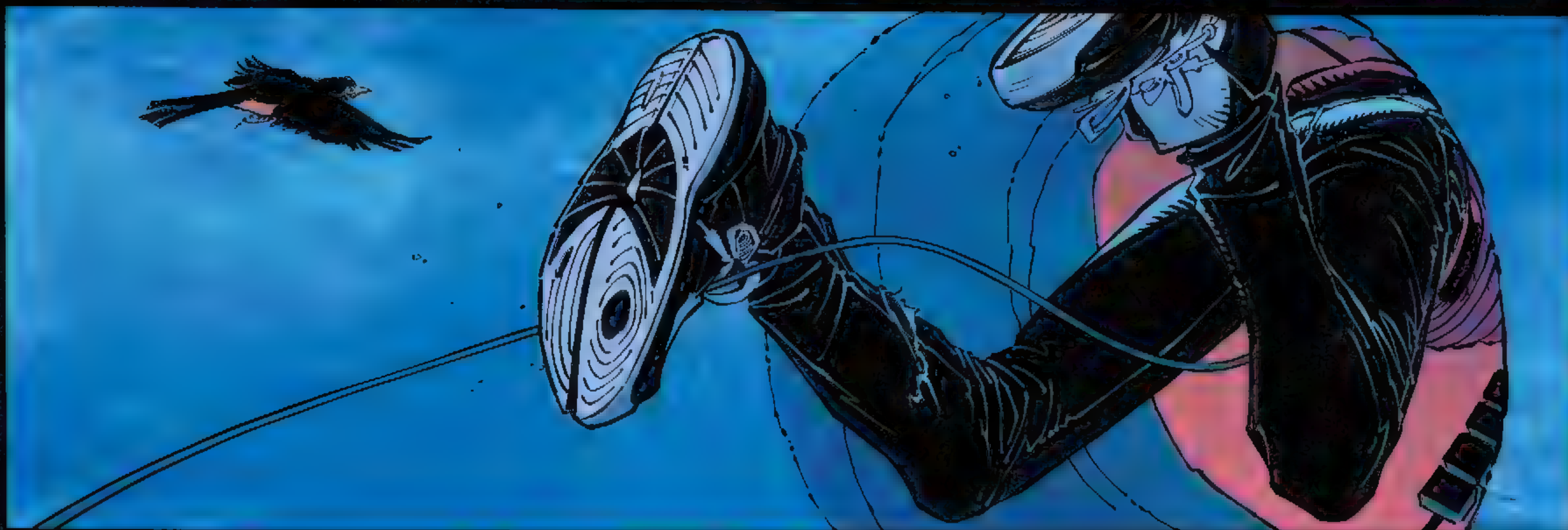


Now, hope he
uses missile
targeting
while he's
immobile.



And just
don't look.
Don't look.







"SUCH A SHORT
CAREER..."



WHAM

Unh!

...OVER
BEFORE YOU
EVEN HIT YOUR
STRIDE.



I KNOW YOU
MUST BE WONDERING
IF YOU MADE ANY
DIFFERENCE. IF WHAT
YOU DID MATTERED TO
ANYONE.

WELL, IT DID.
HUGELY. TO ME. ALL
THIS IS POSSIBLE
BECAUSE OF
YOU.



IF ONLY YOU
KNEW WHAT
YOU WERE UP
AGAINST.



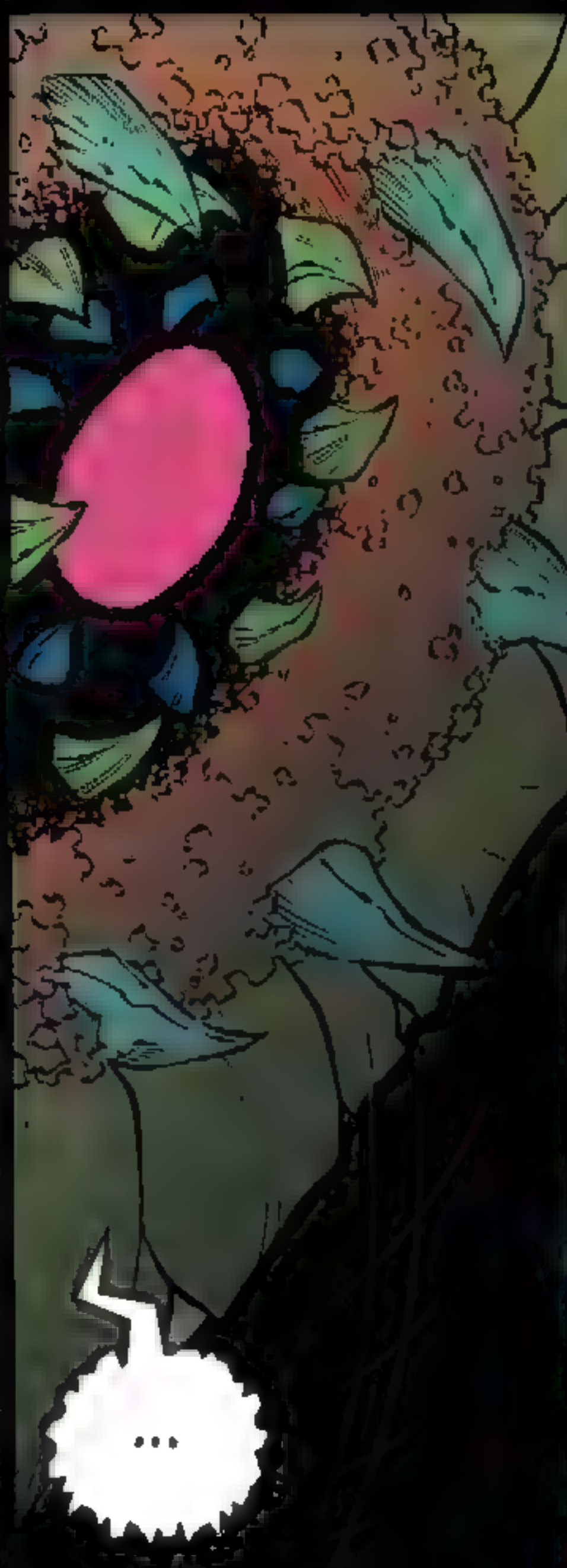
WHAT'S
HIDING IN
ME. THE
CHANGE...



I WANT
SO BADLY TO
KEEP YOU ALIVE
TO SEE IT. WHAT'S
COMING...A WHOLE
CITY, RE-GROWN.
WITH BRAND NEW
SEEDS.



->Cough->
YOU MEAN...
THOSE
SEEDS?



SMELL A
LITTLE CRISPY,
DON'T THEY,
BLOOM?



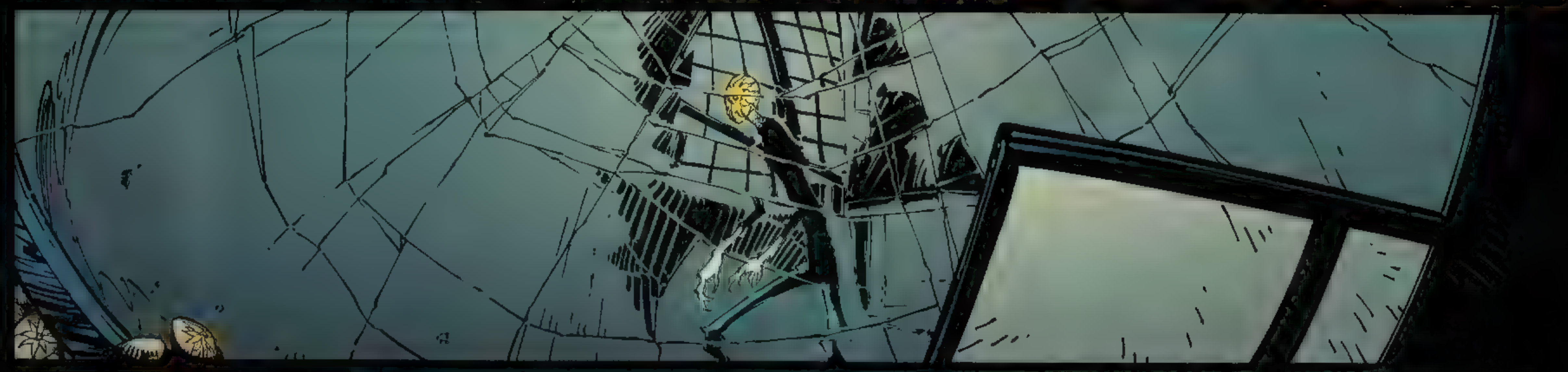
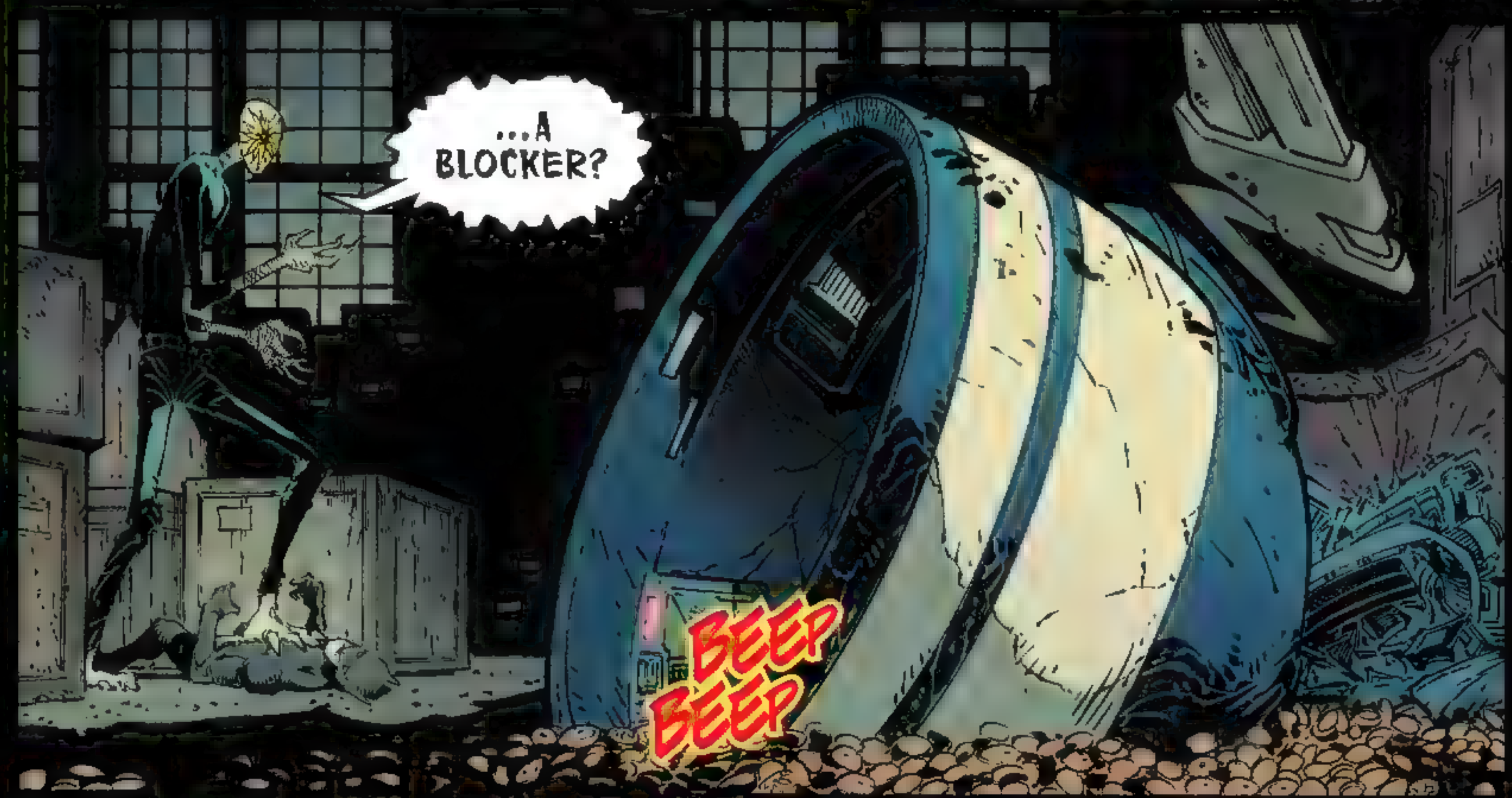
A LITTLE *FRIED*? SEE, WE ALL KNOW YOUR
SEEDS ARE ELECTROMAGNETIC SHELLS
AROUND RADIOACTIVE CORES. I FIGURED
A QUIET CHARGE FROM MY SUIT MIGHT
OVERLOAD THEM. SEEMS TO HAVE
WORKED, AM I RIGHT?

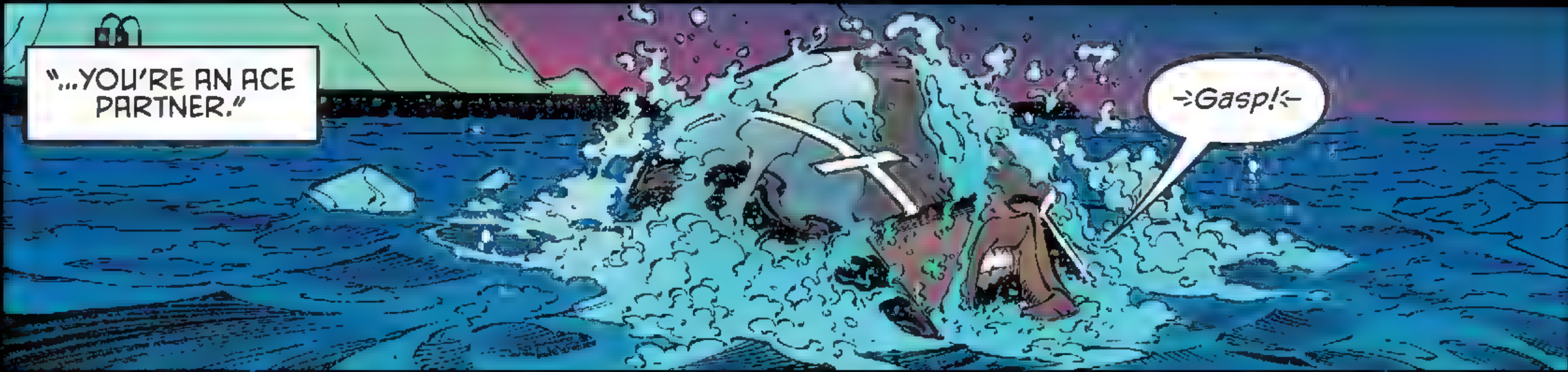
SO, DO WHAT YOU'RE
GOING TO DO. BECAUSE
GUESS WHAT? GOING DOWN
IN THE LINE OF DUTY WAS
ALWAYS PART OF
THE JOB.

BUT AT LEAST
I'LL GO DOWN KNOWING I
STOPPED YOU FROM GROWING
WHATEVER THE HELL YOU WERE
TRYING TO GROW IN
MY CITY.

NOW GO
AHEAD. TAKE
YOUR BEST
SHOT.

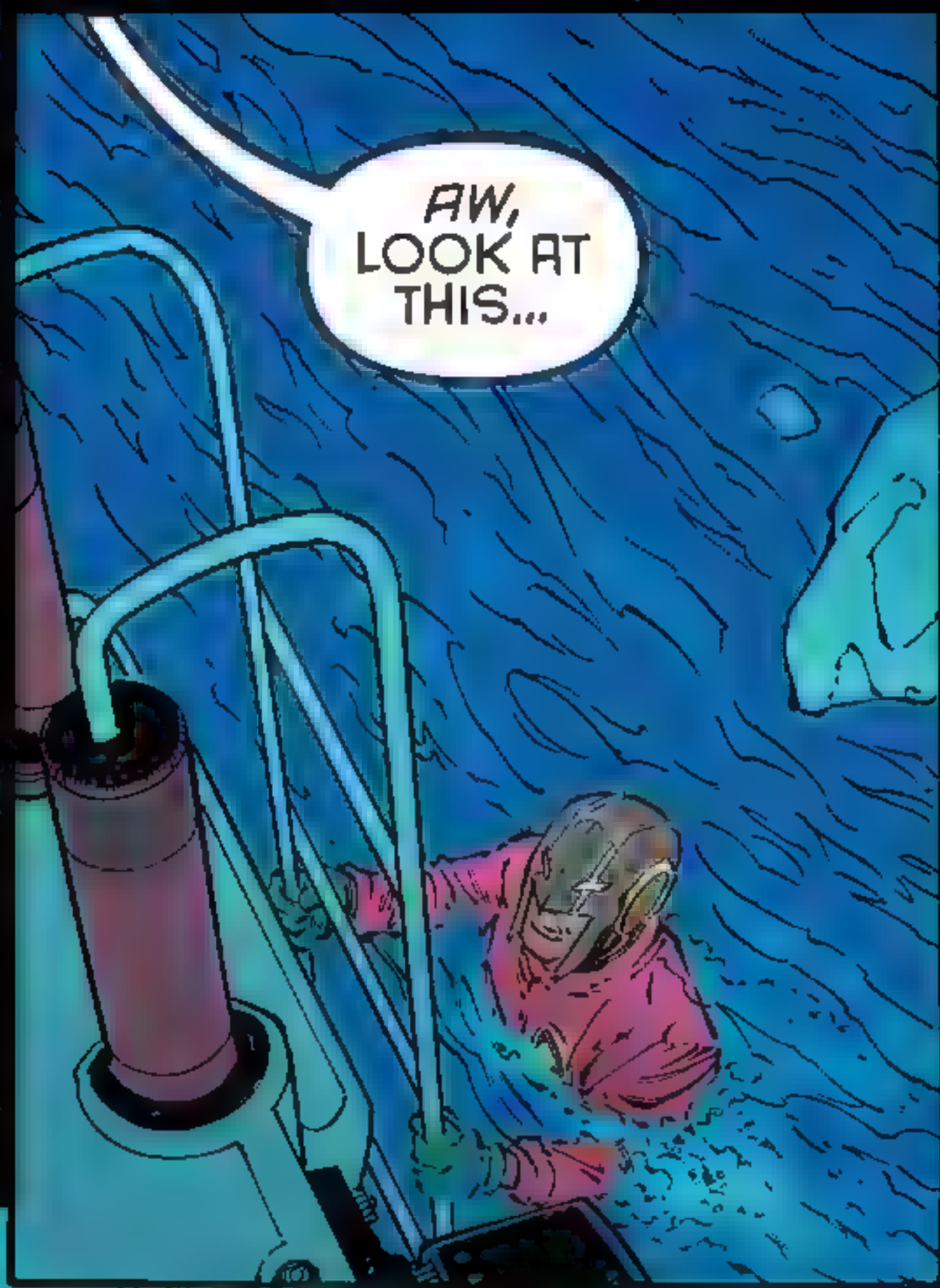






"...YOU'RE AN ACE PARTNER."

=Gasp!<



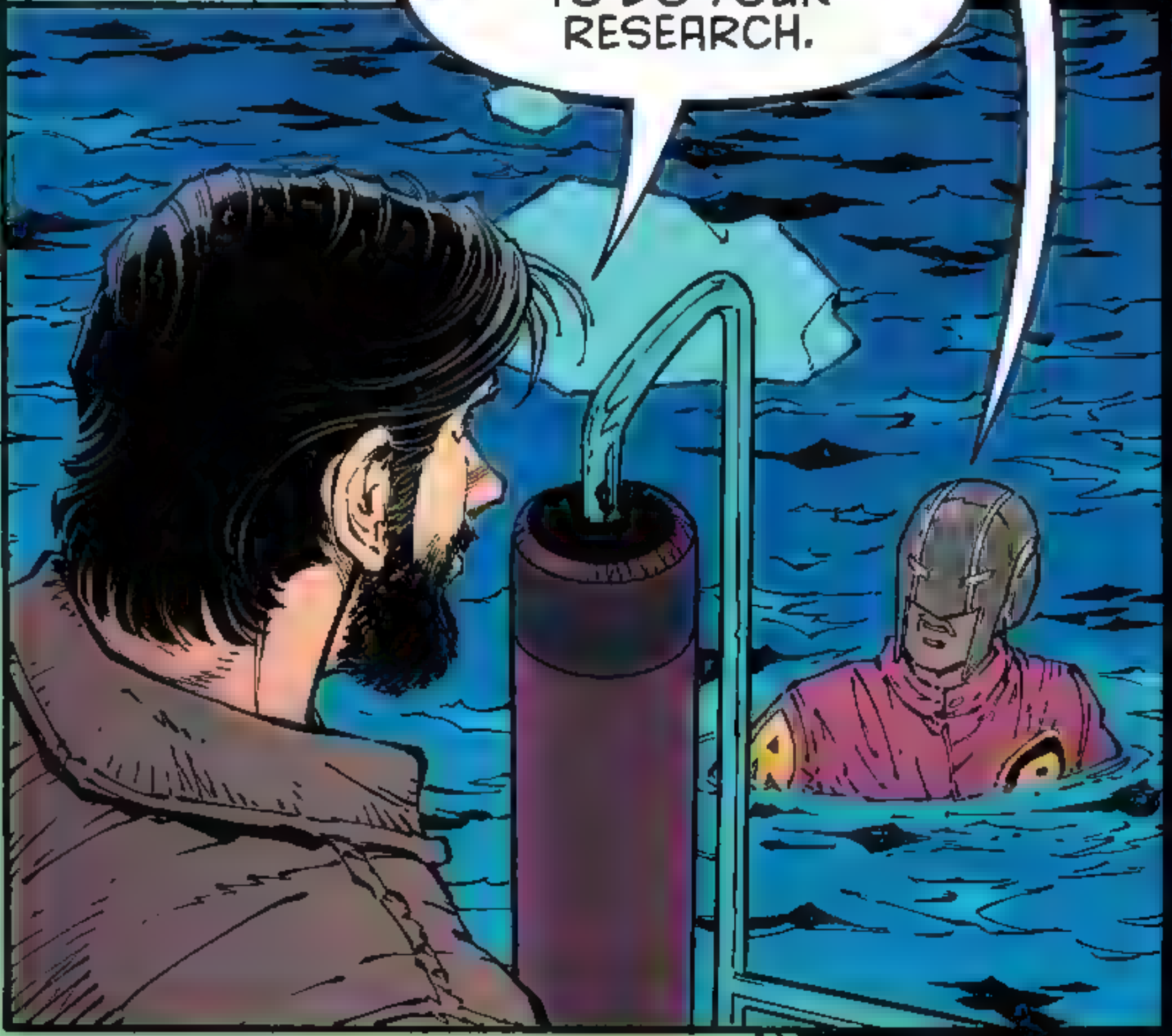
AW, LOOK AT THIS...



...IT'S A BLACK ROBIN. HA. CUTE THOUGHT, KID. LET'S BURY IT.



KRACK



I...I DIDN'T ASK FOR--
YOU DON'T WANT HELP, DON'T USE THE CENTER'S COMPUTER TO DO YOUR RESEARCH.



"WE'RE STANDING BY TO HELP..."

...HOW
LONG UNTIL
YOU'RE READY
FOR PICKUP,
BATMAN?

NOW.

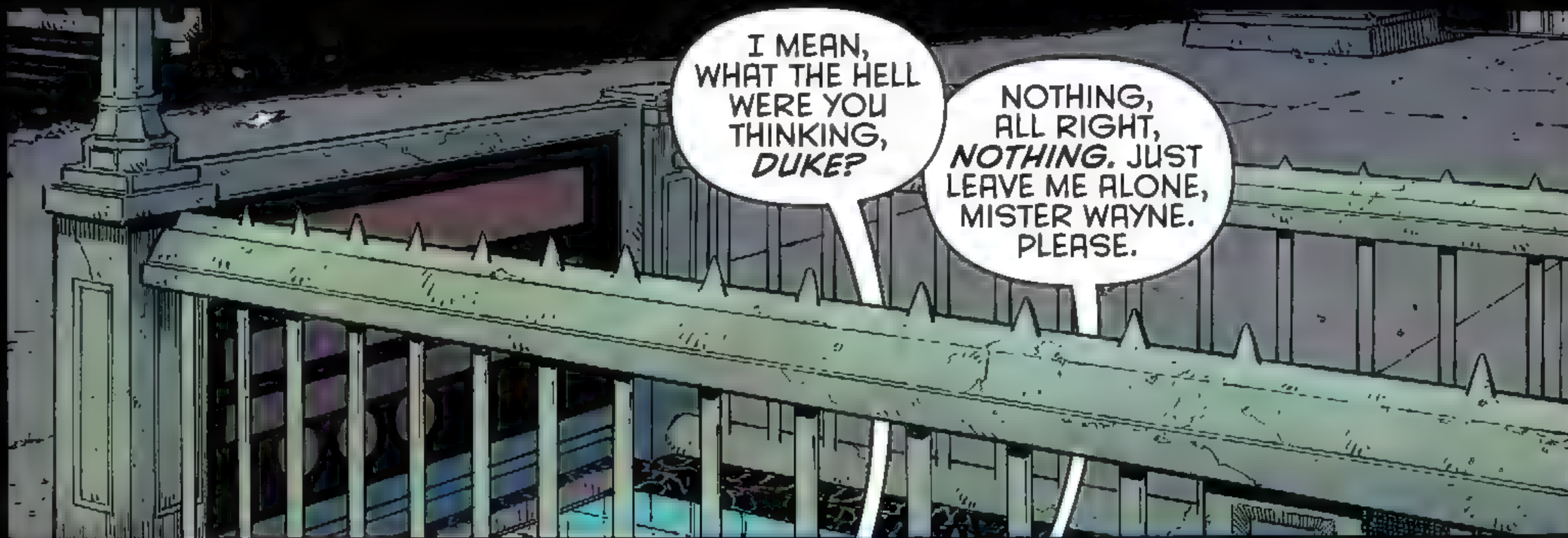
ACTUALLY,
HANG ON
A SEC.



NOW I'M
READY.



"YOU THINK YOU'RE
INVULNERABLE?"



I MEAN, WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINKING, **DUKE**?

NOTHING, ALL RIGHT, **NOTHING**. JUST LEAVE ME ALONE, MISTER WAYNE. PLEASE.

NO. I WON'T LEAVE YOU ALONE. FOR **MONTHS**, YOU'VE GIVEN ME THE DAMN COLD SHOULDER. I **THINK** I JUST SAVED YOU FROM SOME VERY BAD PEOPLE. AT LEAST TELL ME WHAT YOUR PROBLEM WITH ME IS.

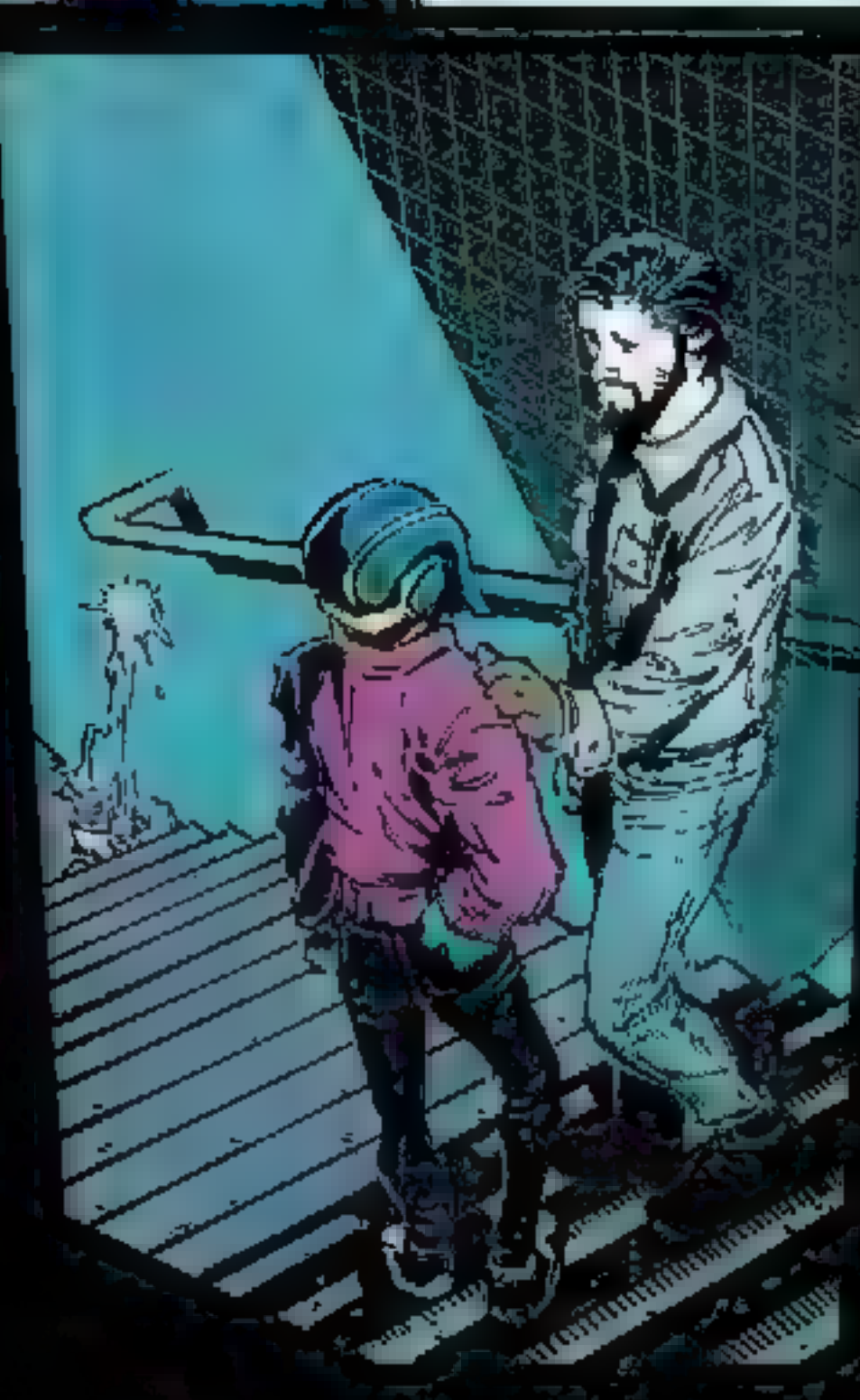
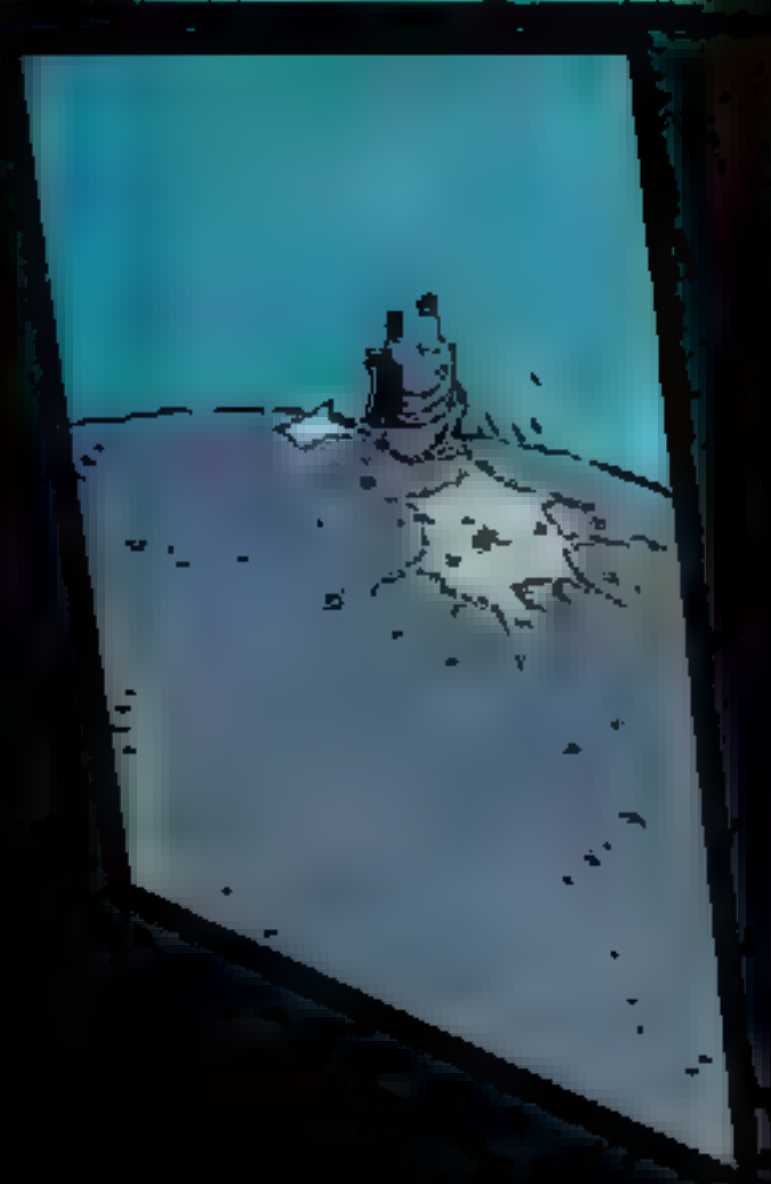
I DON'T HAVE A--



WHAT? WHAT IS IT?



DUKE, I HAVE NEWS ON YOUR PARENTS.



DUKE, TALK TO ME. LISTEN. WHATEVER IT IS, IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT.





I JUST...
MY PARENTS. I
JUST REALIZED,
THEY...

I KNOW,
BUT THEY'RE
GOING TO BE
ALL RIGHT.

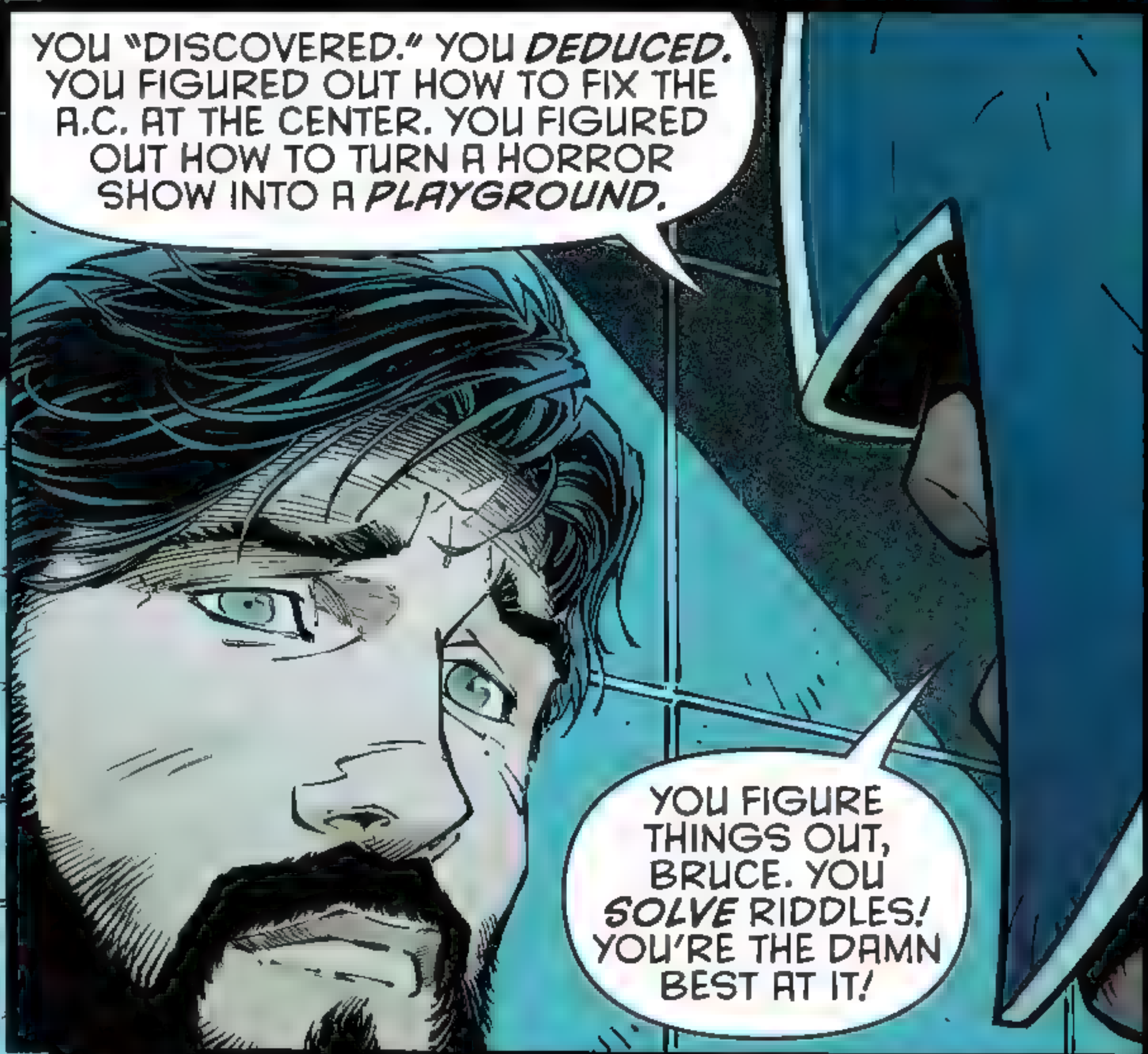


YOU WANT TO
KNOW WHAT MY
PROBLEM WITH
YOU IS, BRUCE?
YEAH?



HOW'D
YOU *FIND* ME,
BRUCE?

I TOLD YOU. THE
SEED WAS GONE. WHEN I
LOOKED AT THE SEARCH HISTORY
ON THE COMPUTER YOU'D BEEN
USING AT THE CENTER, I
DISCOVERED--



YOU "DISCOVERED." YOU *DEDUCED*.
YOU FIGURED OUT HOW TO FIX THE
A.C. AT THE CENTER. YOU FIGURED
OUT HOW TO TURN A HORROR
SHOW INTO A *PLAYGROUND*.

YOU FIGURE
THINGS OUT,
BRUCE. YOU
SOLVE RIDDLES!
YOU'RE THE DAMN
BEST AT IT!



YOU'RE THE BEST IN
THE *WORLD*, AND YET
YOU WON'T LOOK AT
WHAT'S RIGHT IN
FRONT OF YOUR
FACE!

WHAT THE
HELL ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?



THE ONE PLACE YOU DON'T LOOK. NOT FOR REAL. BECAUSE YOU DON'T WANT TO! YOU WANT TO BE *FREE* OF IT! YOU WANT TO BE *THIS GUY!*

BUT ANYONE COULD BE WHO YOU ARE NOW! THE ONE YOU WERE BEFORE, *THAT GUY*, *NO ONE* COULD BE BUT YOU! YOU INSPIRED US, BRUCE. TO BE MORE THAN WE COULD BE. NOT TO JUST BE...ENOUGH.

AN ME? MY PARENTS? ALL OF US, WE FELL FOR IT. *HARD.*



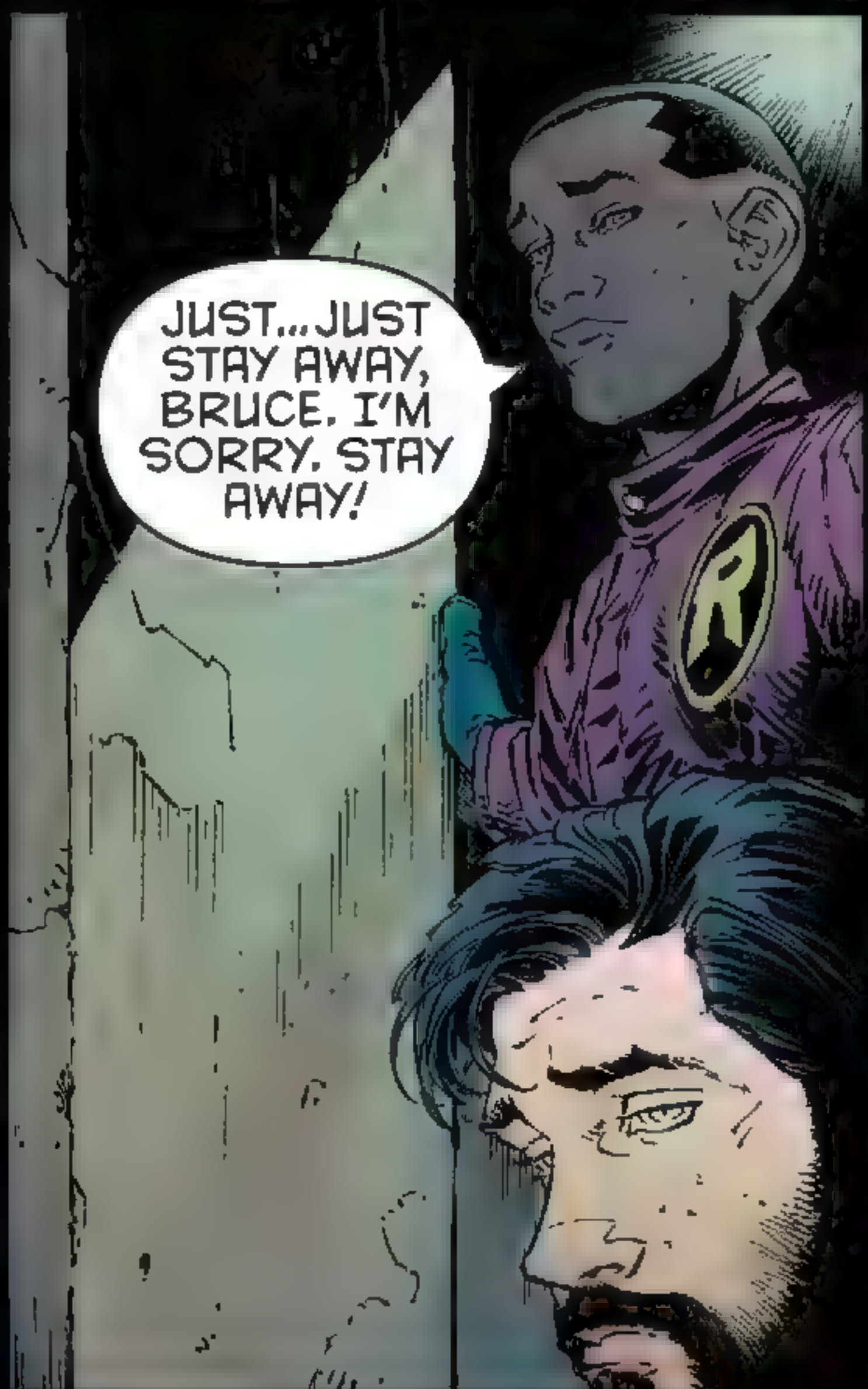
NO! LOOK AT YOUR LIFE! LOOK AT THE HOLES! LOOK AT THE *SHADOWS!*



LOOK! THE TRAVELING YOU DID AS A YOUNG MAN! THE NEGATIVE SPACE! WHAT'S IT *SHAPED* LIKE, BRUCE?

LOOK, DAMMIT! WHAT DO YOU SEE?!







THE
DIRT.





JIM! ARE YOU--

WHAT THE...

That's the thing about playing GCPD at Harvey's...

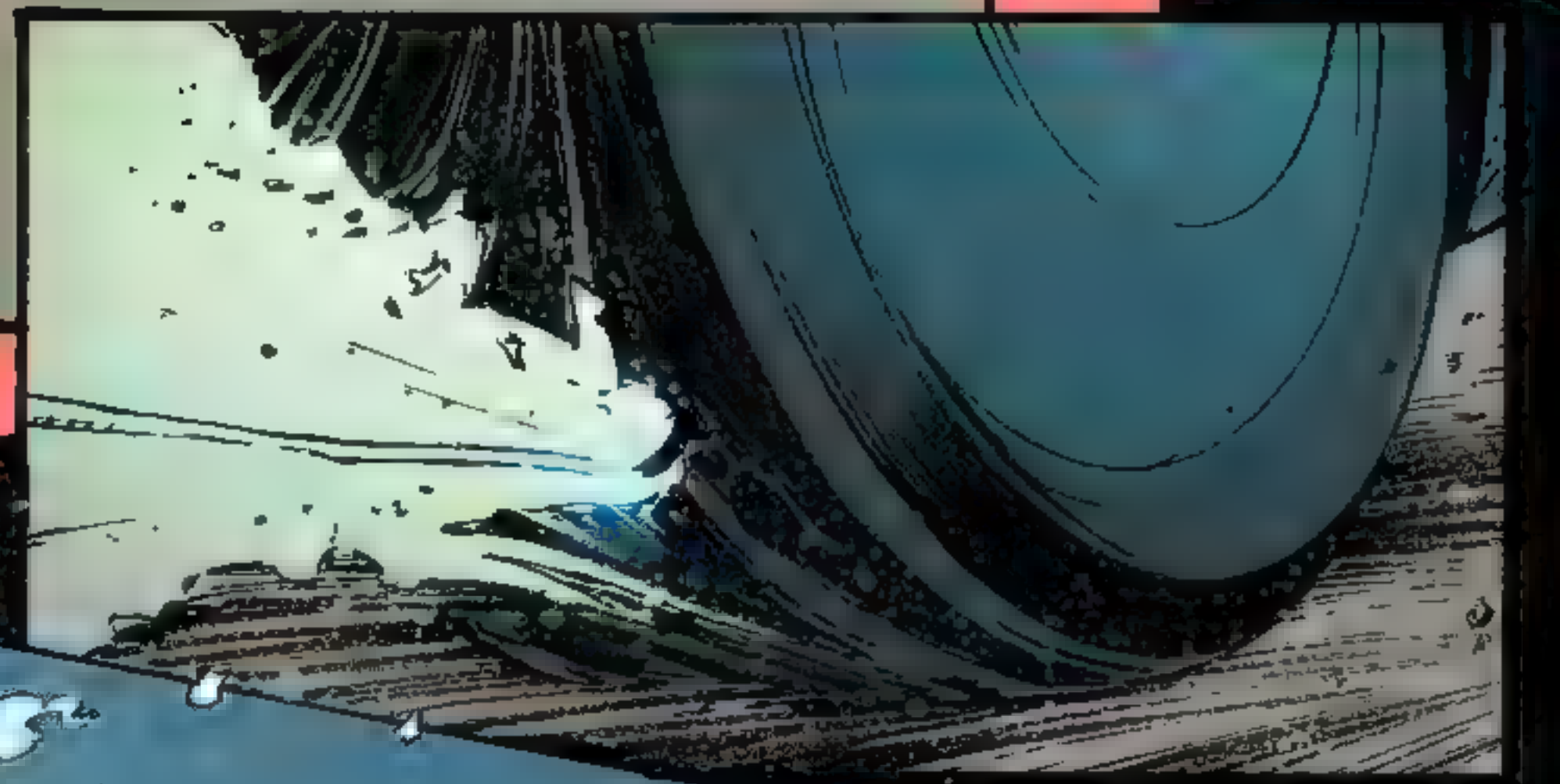
The face down card? The **GOTHAM CARD**? It's on a secret timer.



The countdown is random. So you never know when or if the card will flip. A whole game could go by without the card ever flipping.



But, if the timer **DOES** go off, you have to flip the card, and right then, all the money won so far, the entire night, it **ALL** goes back on the table.

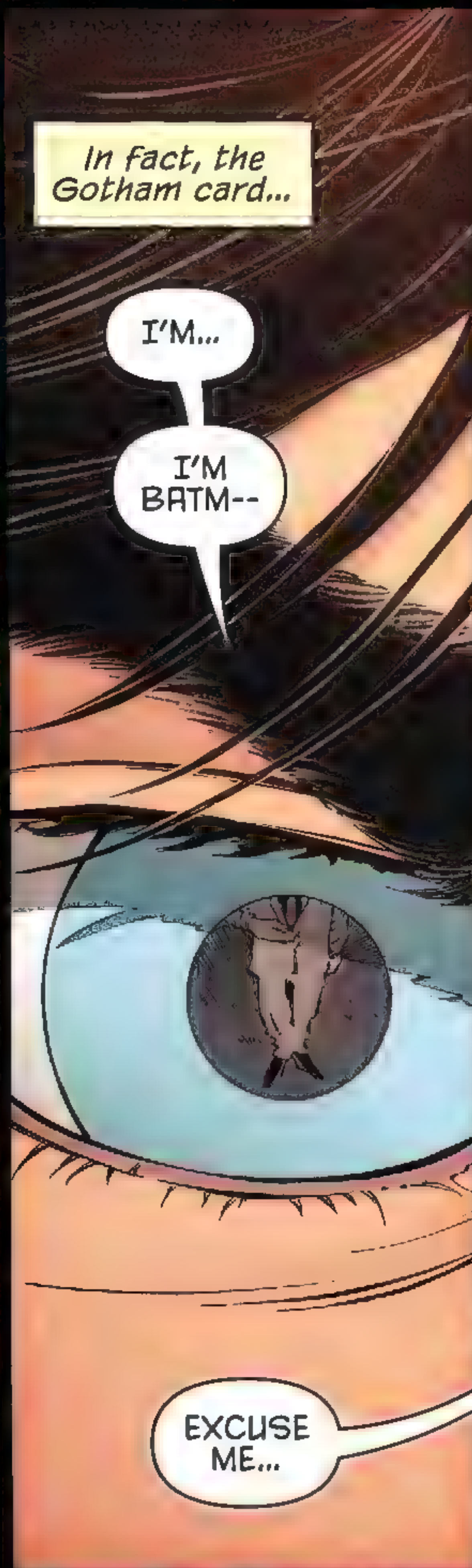
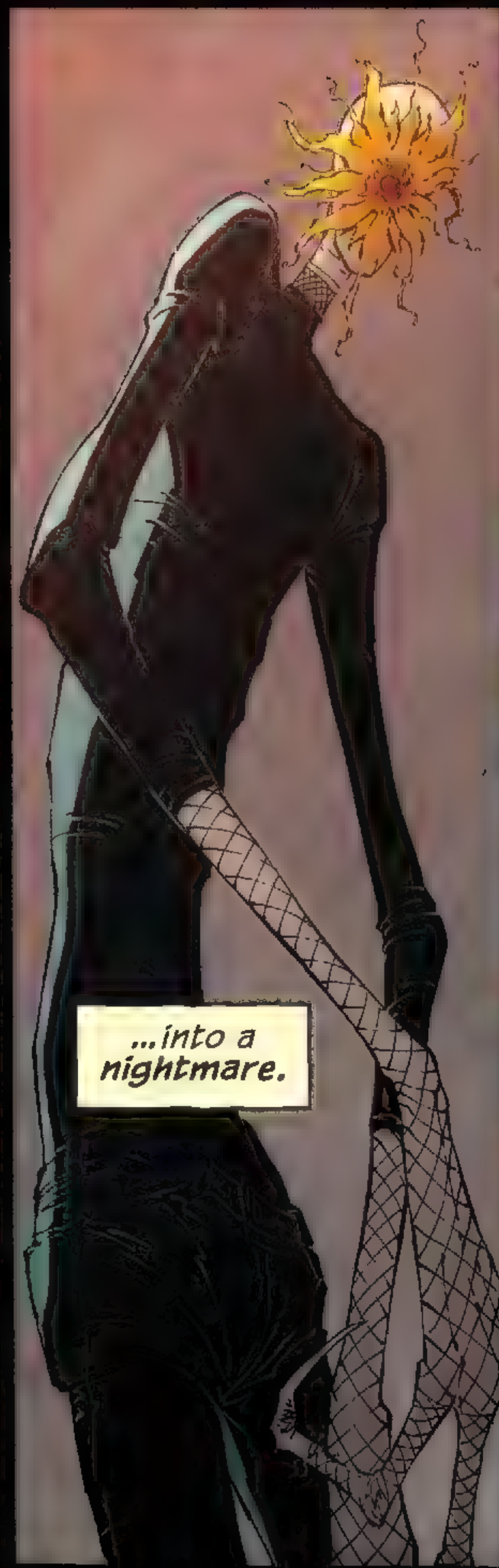
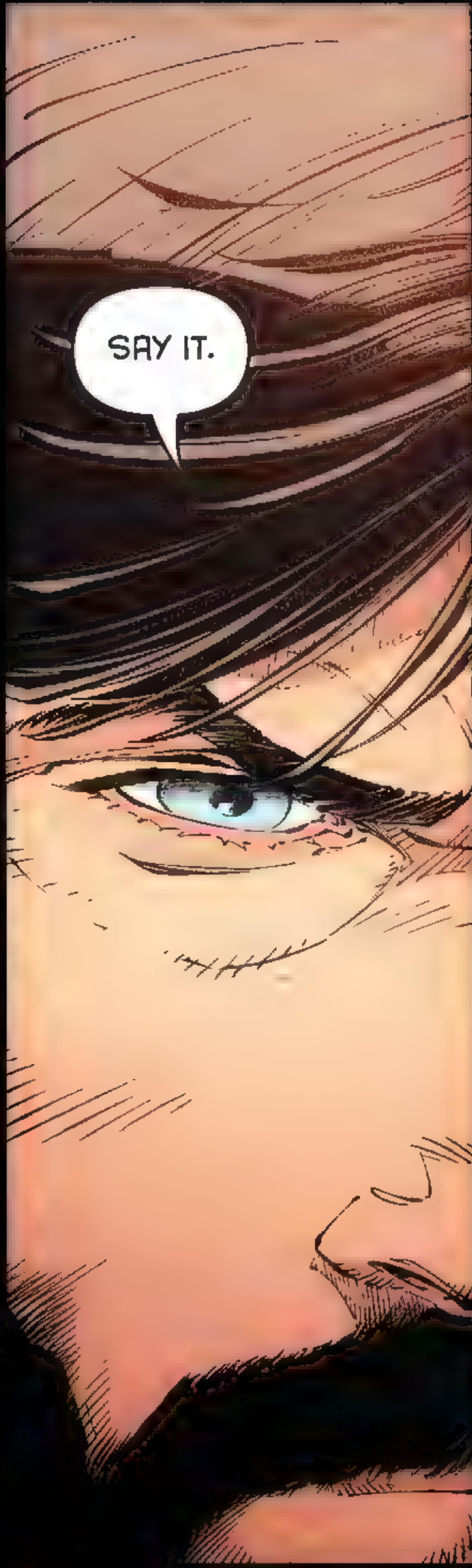


You're now playing **one hand** for everything.

Everything changed, with the Flip of a card.



On the one hand, it could be bad. Something that destroys everything you've built.



...that card could
be your best friend
in a long time.

YES. I WAS
IN AN *ACCIDENT*
NEAR HERE.

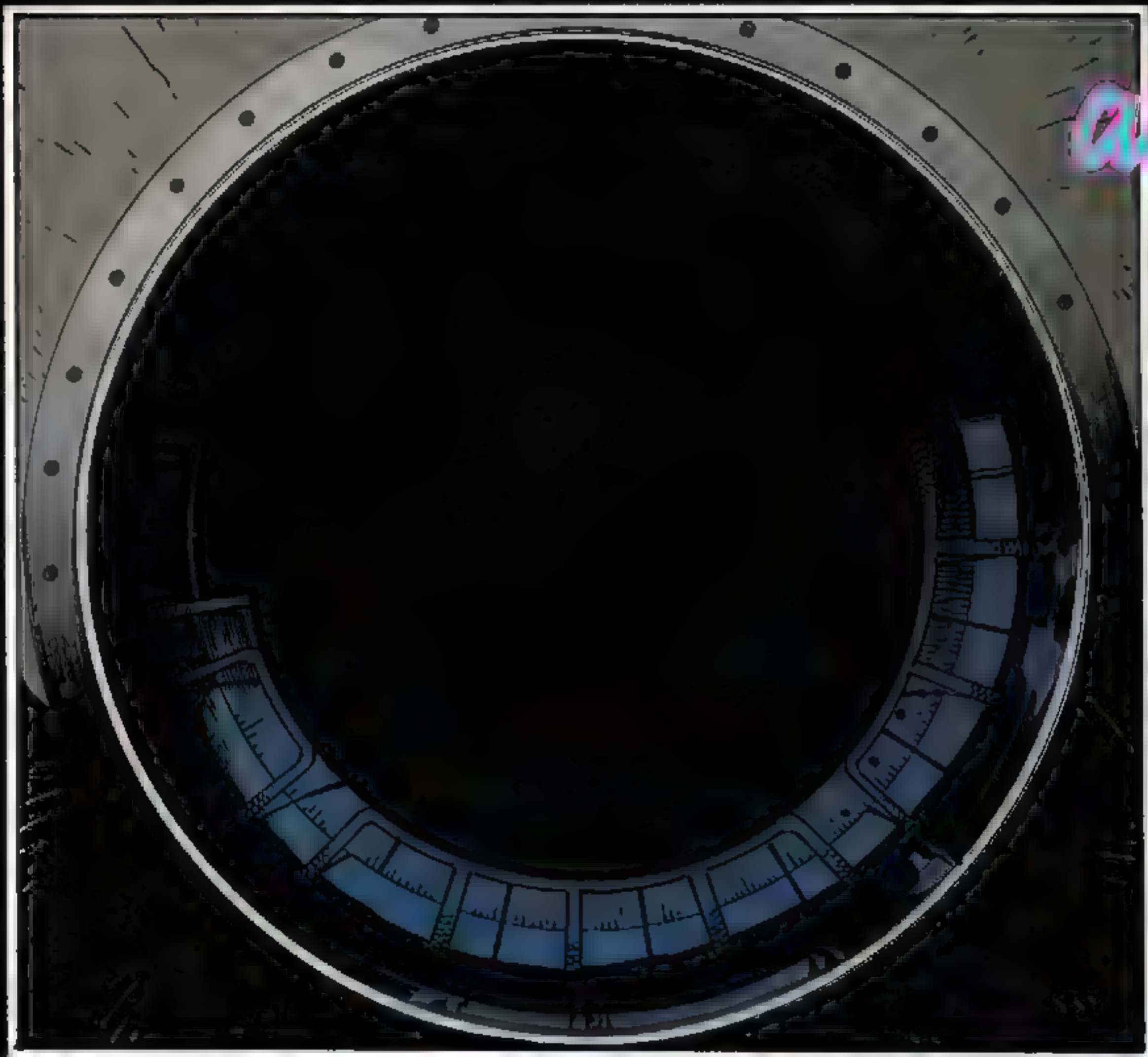
HA.
THAT'S
FUNNY...



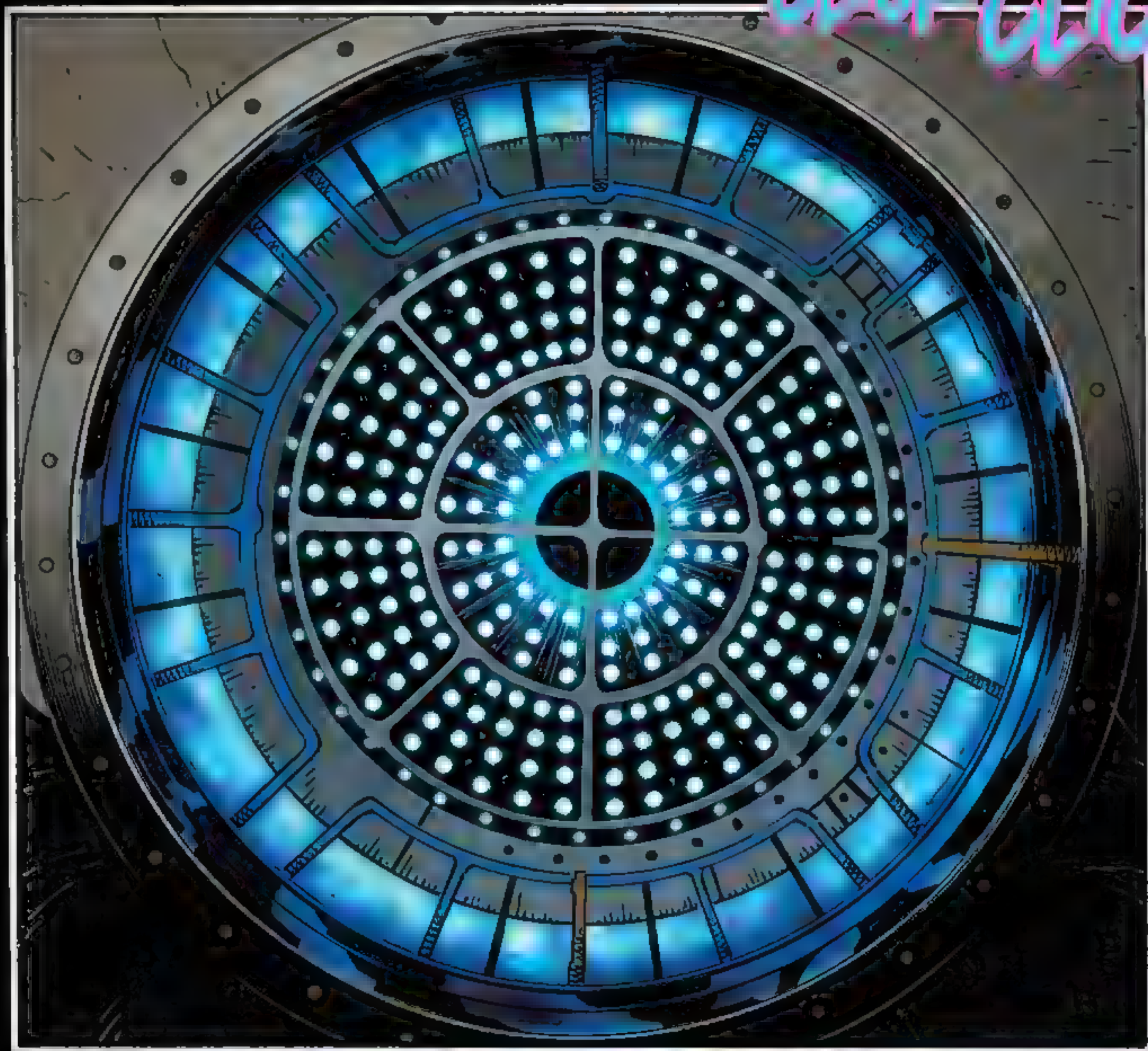
...SO
WAS I.







CLICK

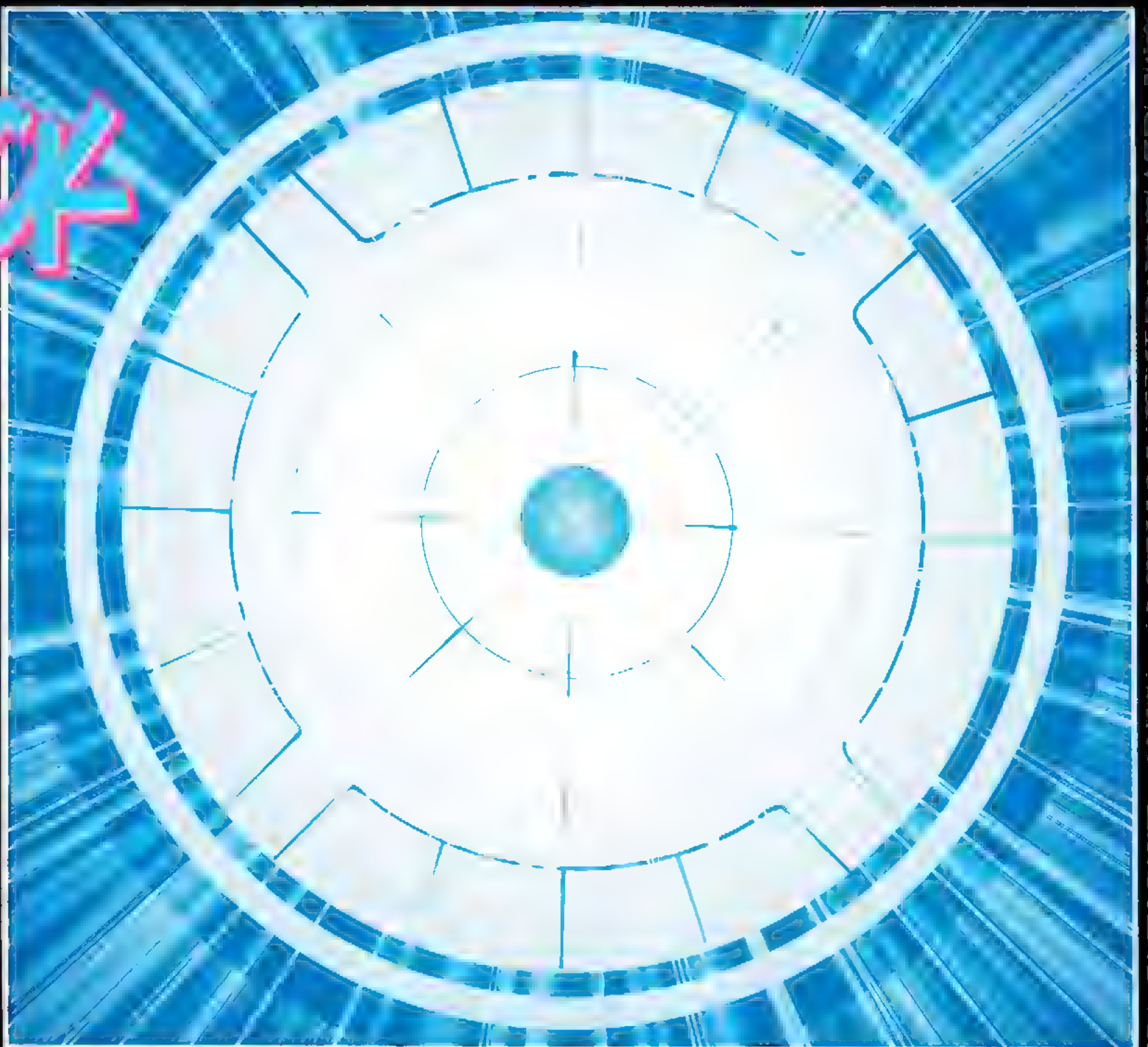


CLICK CLICK

"FLOOR TWO, ARE YOU SEEING THIS? IT'S LOADING UP, BUT WITH TOO MUCH PIN--"

"I'M LOOKING RIGHT NOW! IT'S RUNNING TOO HOT. LIKE SOMETHING IS *FEEDING* IT... THE READINGS SUGGEST A STRANEGET, OR EVEN A QUARK STAR, BUT THAT'S COMPLETELY OUT OF--"

CLICK



"GET IT OFFLINE,!"

"BUT--"

"RIGHT NOW..."

"...BEFORE THE COLLISIONS
BECOME UNSTABLE!"

I'M SORRY,
DO WE KNOW
EACH OTHER?

OH, I'M JUST
HERE TO FIGHT
YOU TO THE
DEATH.

EXCUSE
ME?

FOR THIS BENCH,
OF COURSE! I'M SORRY.
I WAS KIDDING. WE BOTH
JUST SEEM TO LOVE THIS
SPOT EQUALLY. IT'S LIKE AN
ISLAND OF *PEACE* IN THE
CENTER OF THE CITY,
AM I RIGHT?

IT IS...

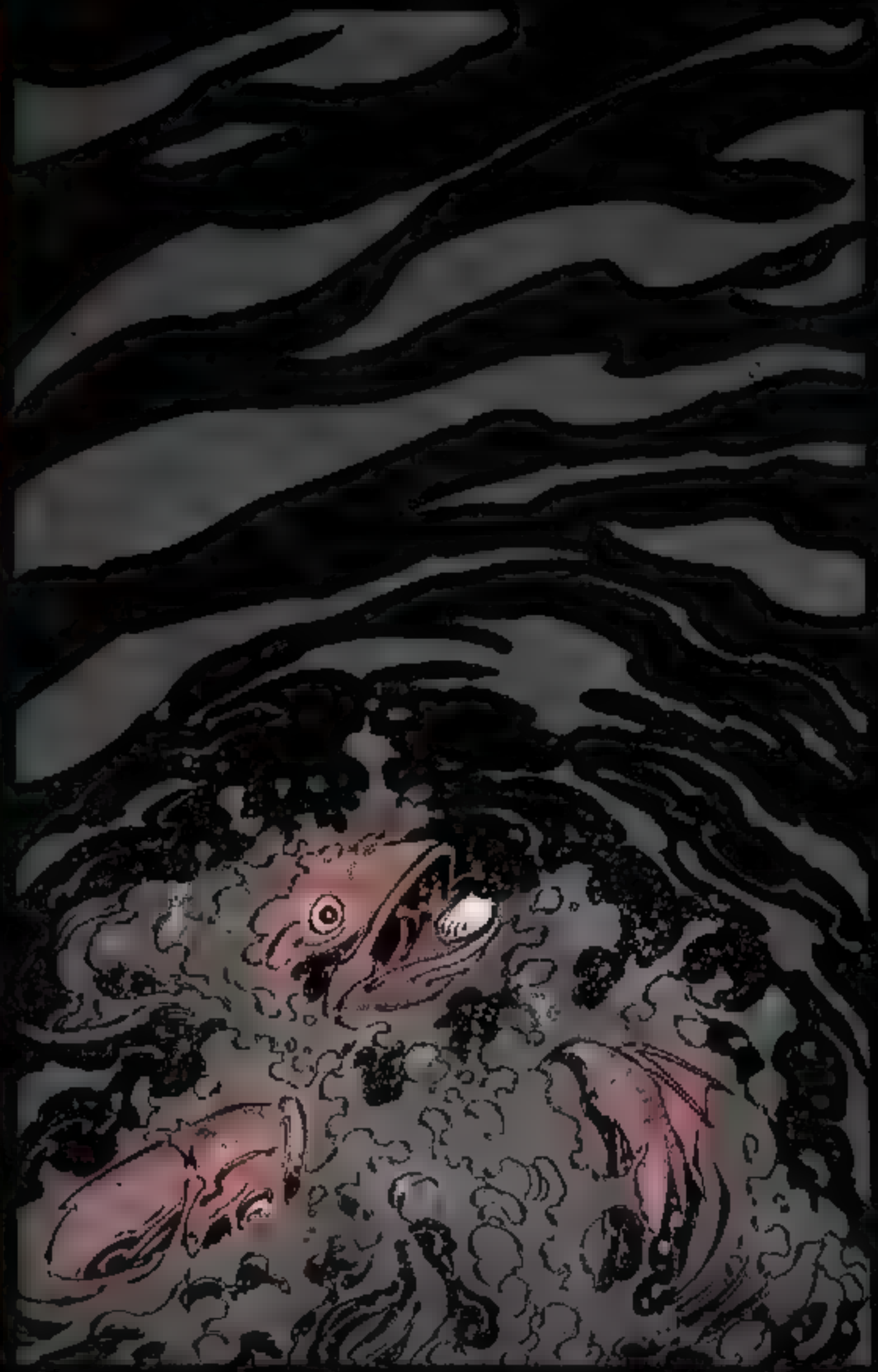
IT
WAS.





WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR--

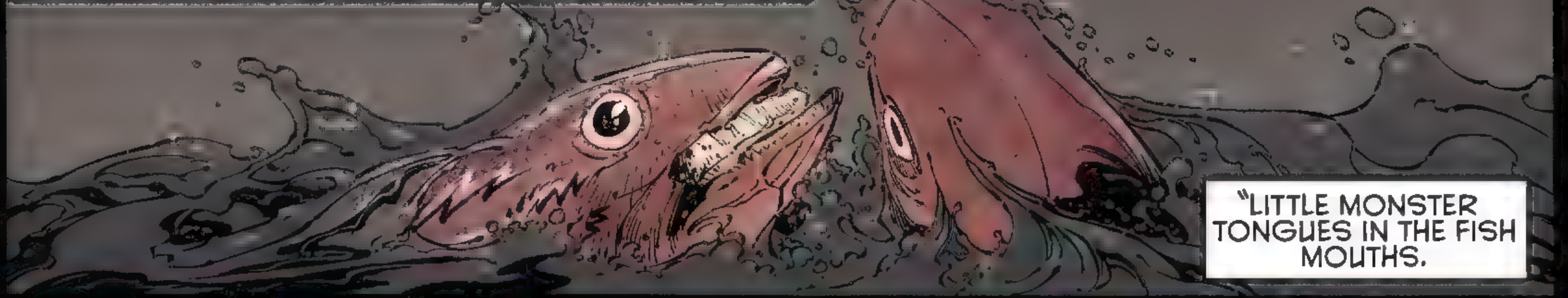
Shh. Shh. Shh. WATCH THIS.



DID YOU SEE THAT? THEY'RE STARVING DOWN THERE.

YOU KNOW, THIS SPOT, IT ALWAYS USED TO BE ROTTEN WITH BUGS. MAYBE FROM SOME GOTHAM VILLAIN, MAYBE JUST NATURALLY. NO ONE KNOWS, BUT IT WAS HELLISH. MOSQUITOES, BLACKFLIES...

"THE RUMOR WAS THERE WAS A KIND OF GIANT PARASITIC LOUSE THAT SWAM INSIDE FISHES' MOUTHS AND ACTUALLY BIT OFF THEIR TONGUES. THEN REPLACED THE FISHES' TONGUES WITH THEMSELVES.



"LITTLE MONSTER TONGUES IN THE FISH MOUTHS.



Hmm.



I SHOULD GO. I DON'T KNOW THAT I'LL BE BACK. SO THE BENCH...I GUESS IT'S YOURS.



BEFORE YOU GO, LET ME SHOW YOU SOMETHING?



I'M SORRY, BUT--



OH, DON'T WORRY, IT'LL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE...

"IT WAS A CRASH..."



GERI,
ANYONE...*BLOOM*,
HE CRASHED THE
TRUCK. COME IN,
DAMMIT, COME
IN!



JULIA!
DARYL!
TALK TO ME!
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT?!

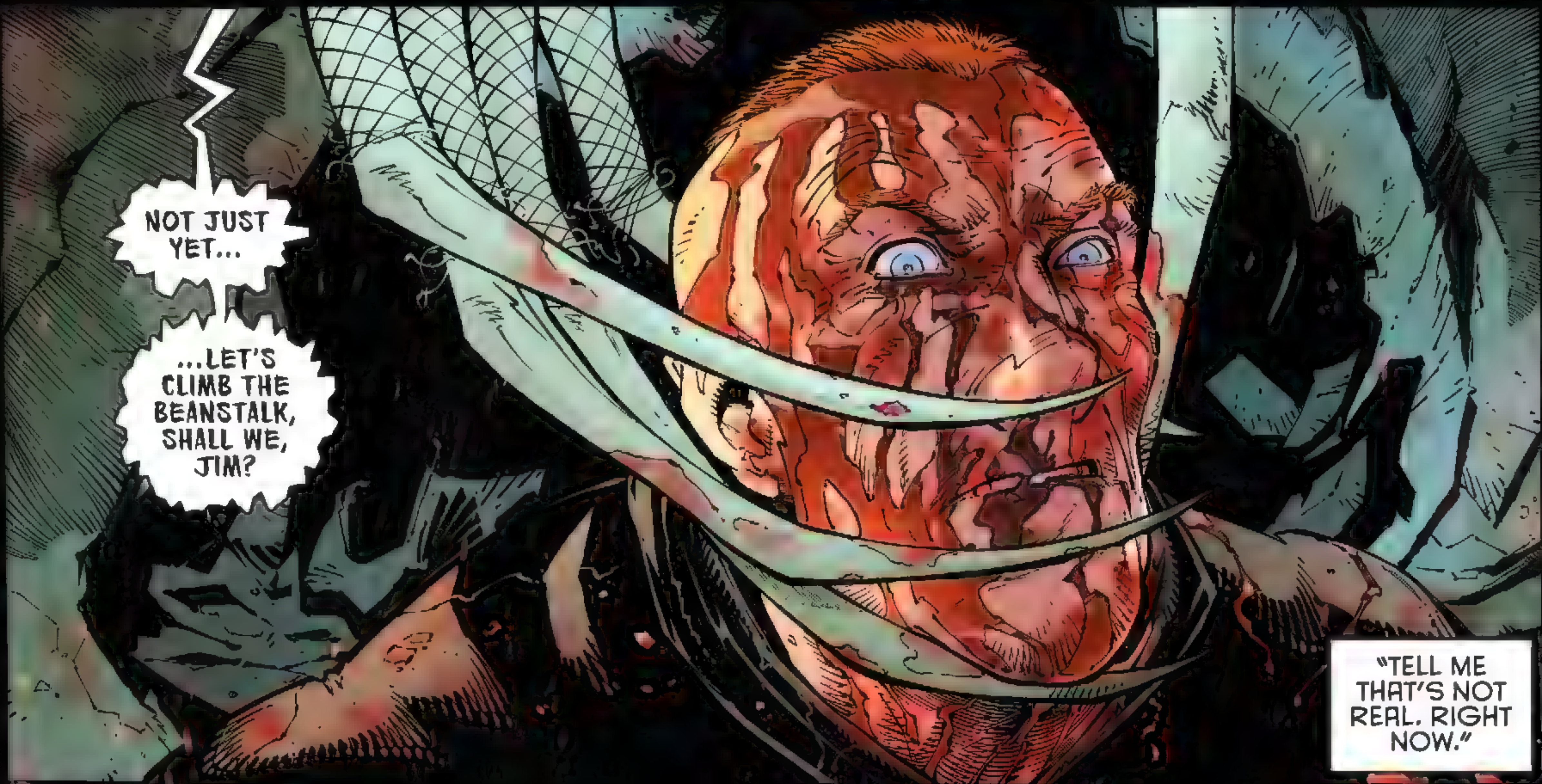
I THINK
IT'S SAFE
TO SAY,
UM...



...NO.



MISTER
BLOOM, CAN
WE KILL HIM
NOW?



NOT JUST
YET...

...LET'S
CLIMB THE
BEANSTALK,
SHALL WE,
JIM?

"TELL ME
THAT'S NOT
REAL. RIGHT
NOW."



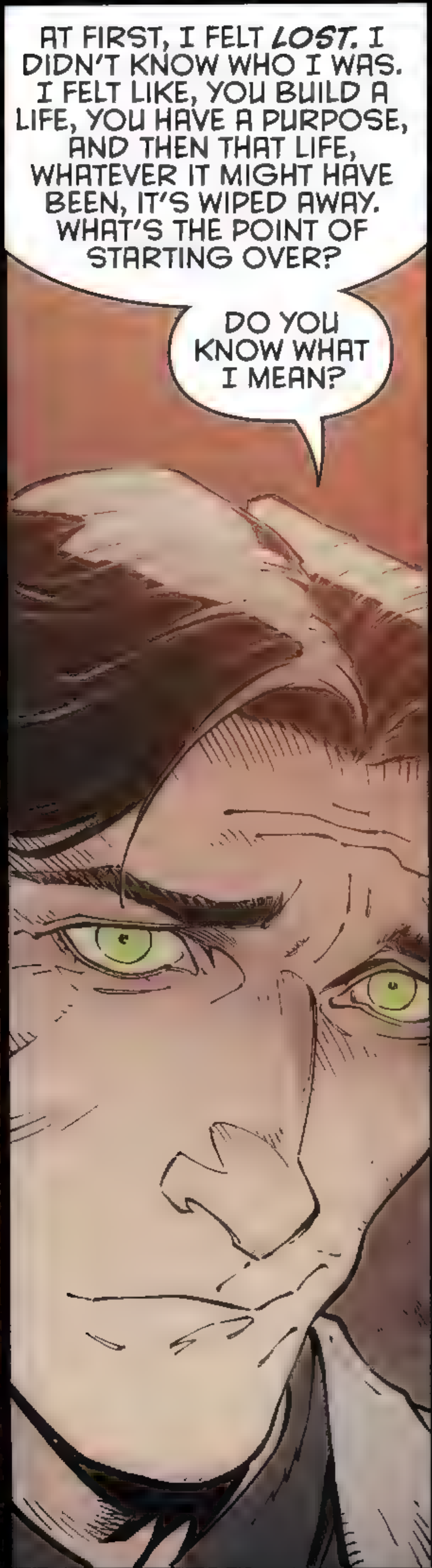
DAMMIT,
I SAID--



SORRY,
SORRY! I WAS
JUST TRYING TO MAKE
A POINT. I DIDN'T MEAN
TO STARTLE YOU. SEE,
I WAS HURT IN THE
JOKER'S ATTACK, TOO.
ONE OF THE LAST
RESCUED.



THE
WHOLE
THING...IT
JUST
CHANGED
ME.



AT FIRST, I FELT **LOST**. I
DIDN'T KNOW WHO I WAS.
I FELT LIKE, YOU BUILD A
LIFE, YOU HAVE A PURPOSE,
AND THEN THAT LIFE,
WHATEVER IT MIGHT HAVE
BEEN, IT'S WIPED AWAY.
WHAT'S THE POINT OF
STARTING OVER?

DO YOU
KNOW WHAT
I MEAN?



... THE
GUN.

RIGHT. THE
GUN. SO, I
BOUGHT IT.

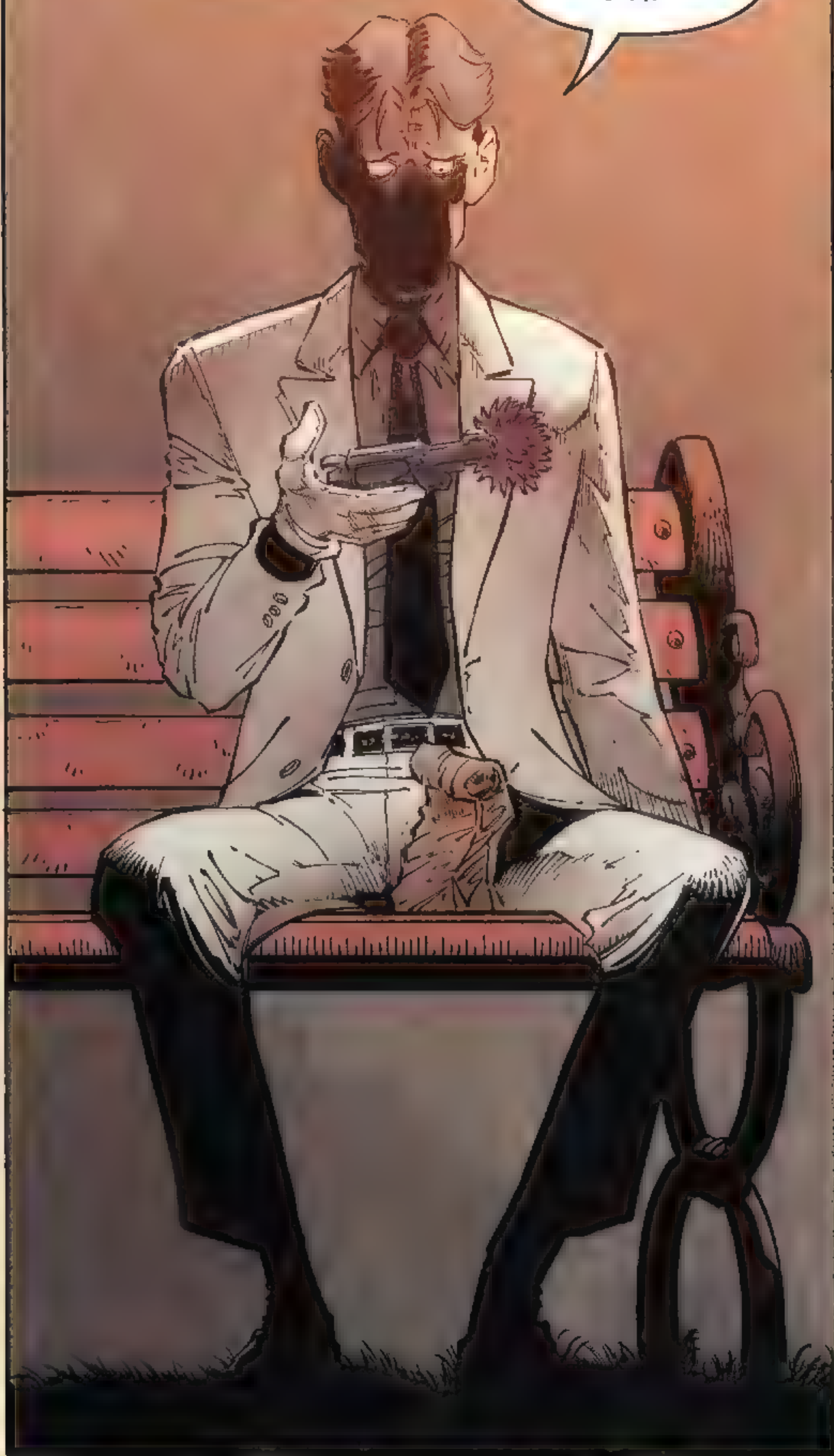
I CAME HERE,
TO THIS PLACE,
TO USE IT ON
MYSELF.

I HAD IT IN MY
MOUTH...SOMETIMES
WHEN I SMILE...WHEN
I *SMILE* I CAN STILL
TASTE THE METAL.

BUT THEN
IT STRUCK ME.
HOW *QUIET* THIS
SPOT WAS. HOW...
CALM.

LIKE A GUN
COULDN'T BE FIRED
HERE, YOU KNOW? LIKE IT
WAS THE ONE PLACE IN
THE CITY WHERE A GUN
SHOULDN'T AND
COULDN'T GO OFF.

SO I
STARTED
COMING HERE,
DAY BY
DAY.



AND
NOW...

NOW I WORK AT A
BUTCHER SHOP. I HAVE
AN APARTMENT. I'M HAPPY.
AND I SEE YOU HERE. YOU
USED TO LOOK LOST,
SORT OF...*HAUNTED*.
BUT LATELY...YOU
SEEM...



...
AT
REST.



SO THEN
DON'T
DO IT.

DON'T
BECOME
WHO YOU
WERE
BEFORE.



WHAT THE
HELL DID
YOU JUST
SAY?



"UP AND
UP AND
UP..."

...GREAT
VIEW, EH
JIM?

ARE YOU
GETTING THIS?
HE'S GOT TO BE
TWO STORIES
TALL AND STILL
GROW--

LORD,
IN HIS HAND...
IS THAT...?

JIM
GORDON?

JUST GET
IT OVER WITH,
BLOOM.

AW,
RELAX,
JIM...

"...IT'S TIME TO SHOW THEM
YOUR PRETTY FACE."

I'M SAYING,
DON'T GO BACK
TO BEING WHO
YOU WERE. THAT'S
WHY I'M
HERE.

THAT'S
WHAT I CAME TO
ASK YOU.

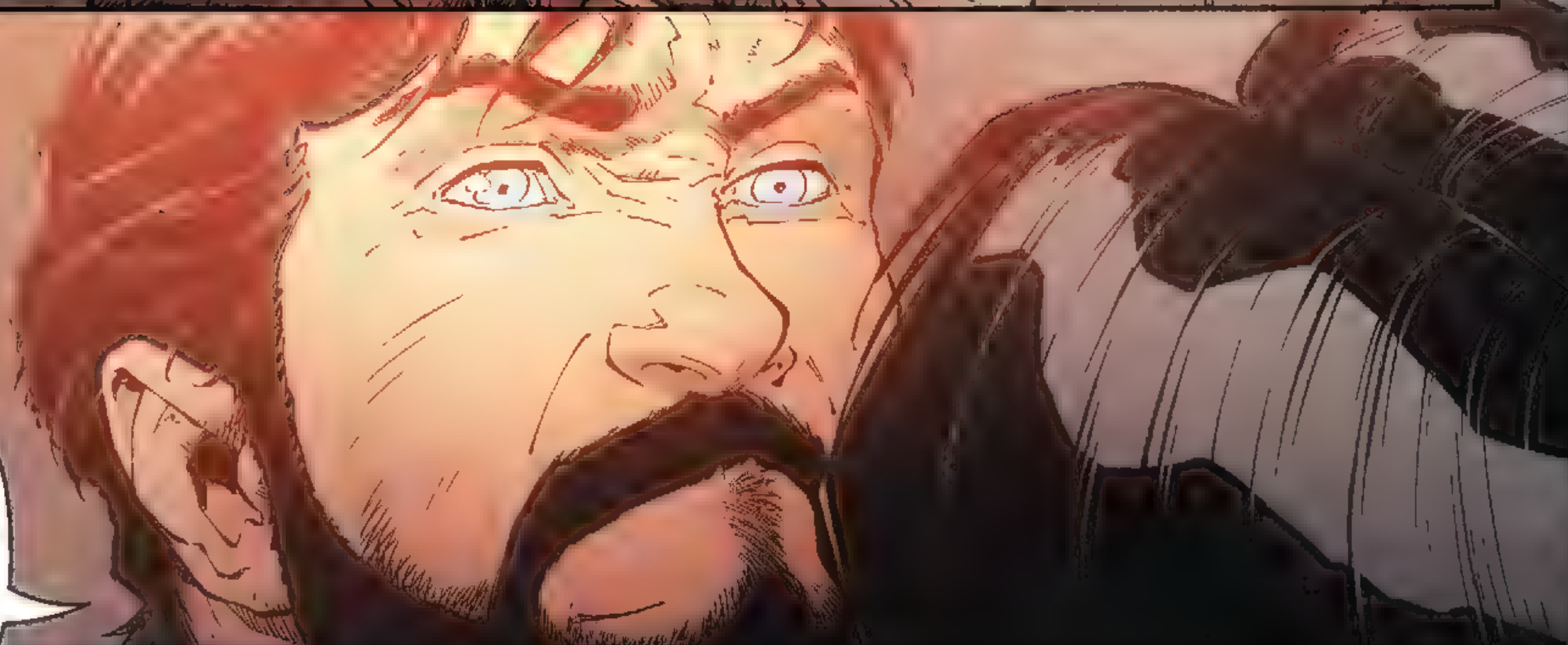


COME HERE!
HOW DO YOU
KNOW WHO I
WAS?!

YOU'RE **BRUCE
WAYNE**. YOU CAN
STOP IT ALL FROM
GOING BACK TO
THE WAY IT
WAS!

ME?!
YOU THINK I
DON'T WANT
TO STOP
IT?!

I LOVE
SOMEONE! I **AM**
SOMEONE HERE! YOU
THINK I **WANT** TO GO
BACK?! WHY SHOULD
I?! WHY ISN'T THIS
ENOUGH?! **WHY?!**

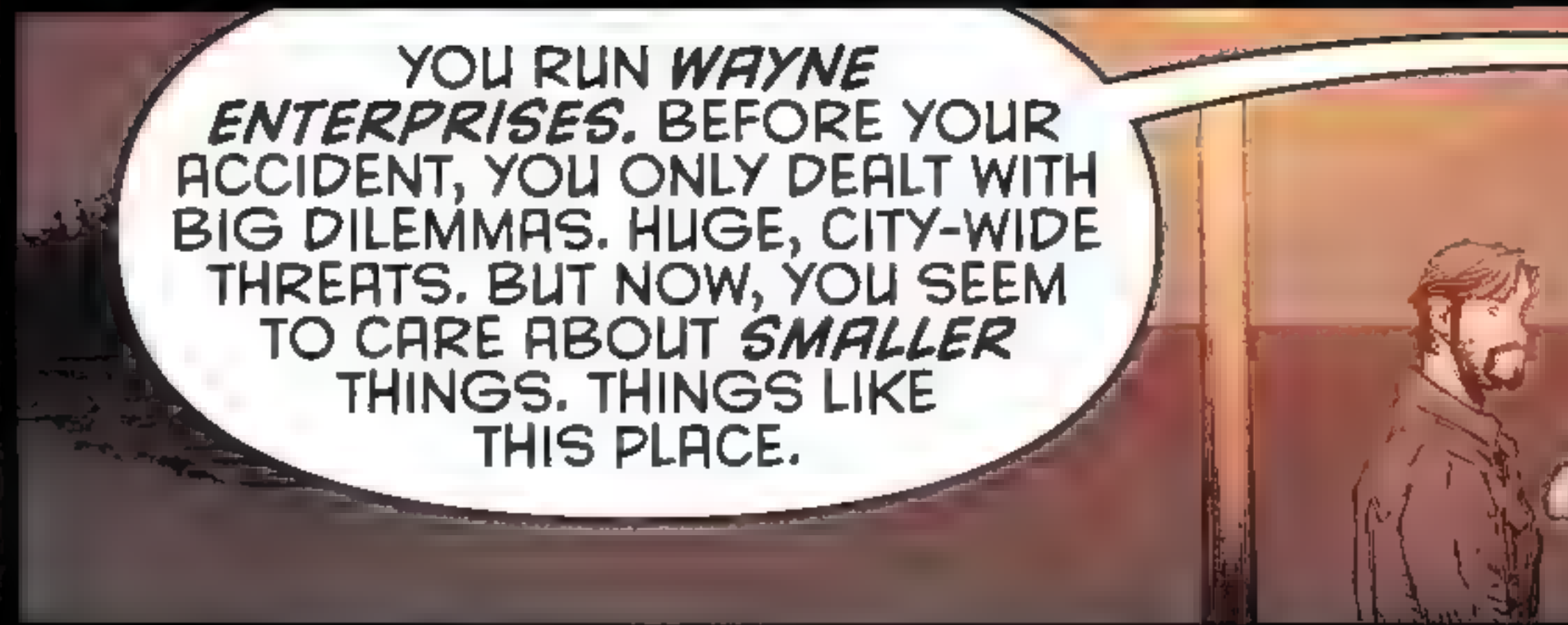




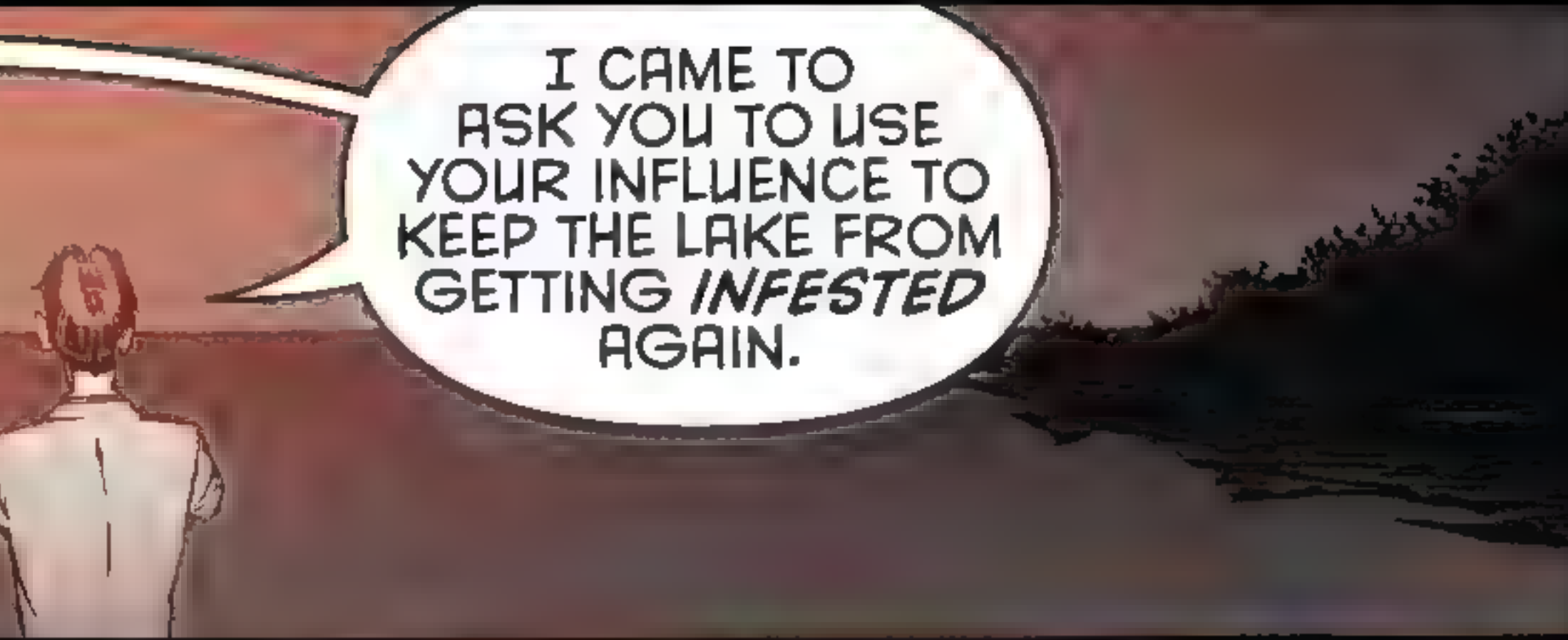
I...I WAS JUST TALKING ABOUT THE *LAKE*! CALM DOWN!



THE... WHAT?



YOU RUN *WAYNE ENTERPRISES*. BEFORE YOUR ACCIDENT, YOU ONLY DEALT WITH BIG DILEMMAS. HUGE, CITY-WIDE THREATS. BUT NOW, YOU SEEM TO CARE ABOUT *SMALLER* THINGS. THINGS LIKE THIS PLACE.



I CAME TO ASK YOU TO USE YOUR INFLUENCE TO KEEP THE LAKE FROM GETTING *INFESTED* AGAIN.



SOMETIMES, I CAN ALMOST HEAR THEM, THE *BUGS* SHIFTING IN THEIR EGGS. I PICTURE HOW IT'LL BE AND IT'S LIKE...



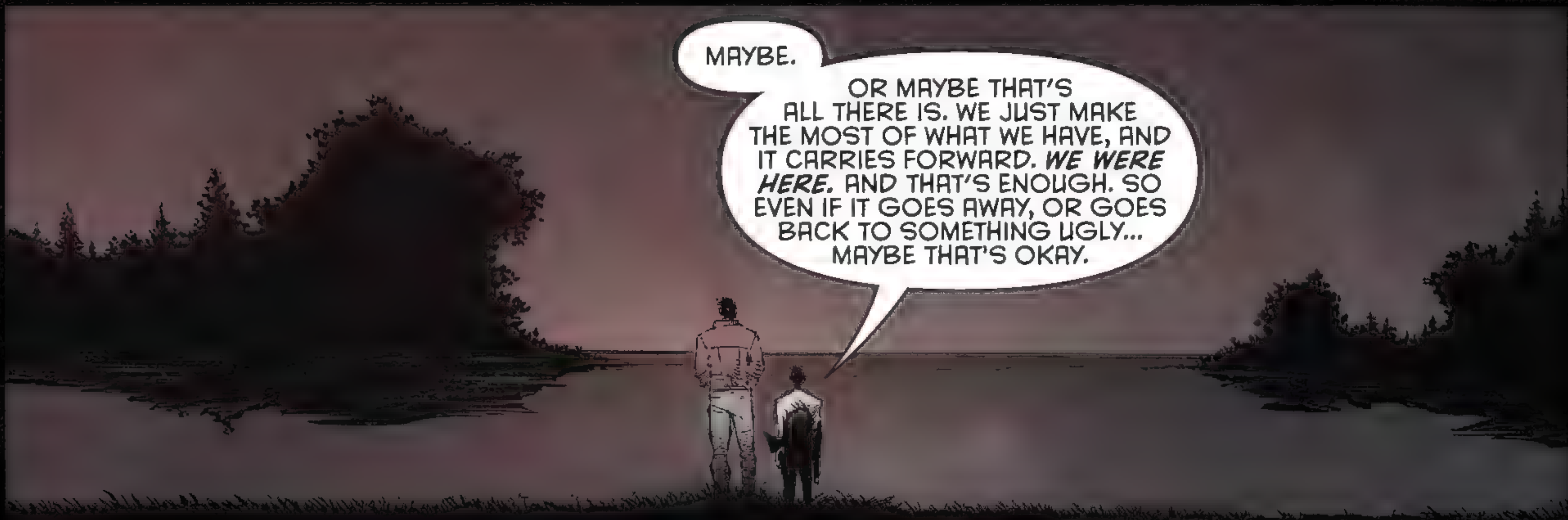
I'M NOT HEAD OF *WAYNE ENTERPRISES* ANYMORE. I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO KEEP THINGS AS THEY ARE.



NO?



NO. BUT IF IT GOES BACK, WHAT WAS THE DAMN POINT? IF IT DOESN'T LAST, IF IT ALL JUST FALLS APART IN THE END AND IF IT'S NOT MORE THAN JUST...JUST *NOW*, WHY DOES IT MATTER? MAYBE IT'S JUST SOME BIG...



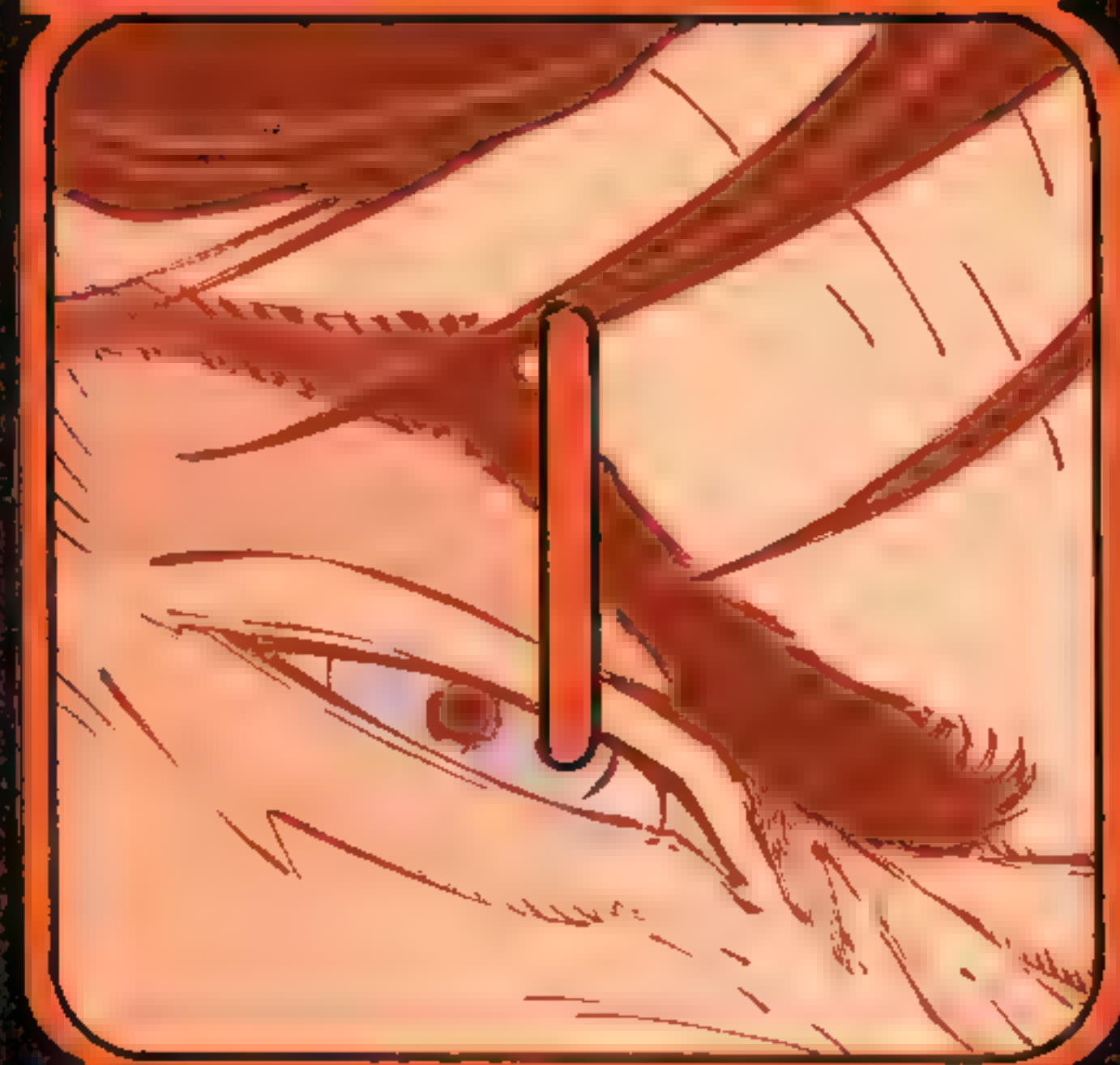
MAYBE.

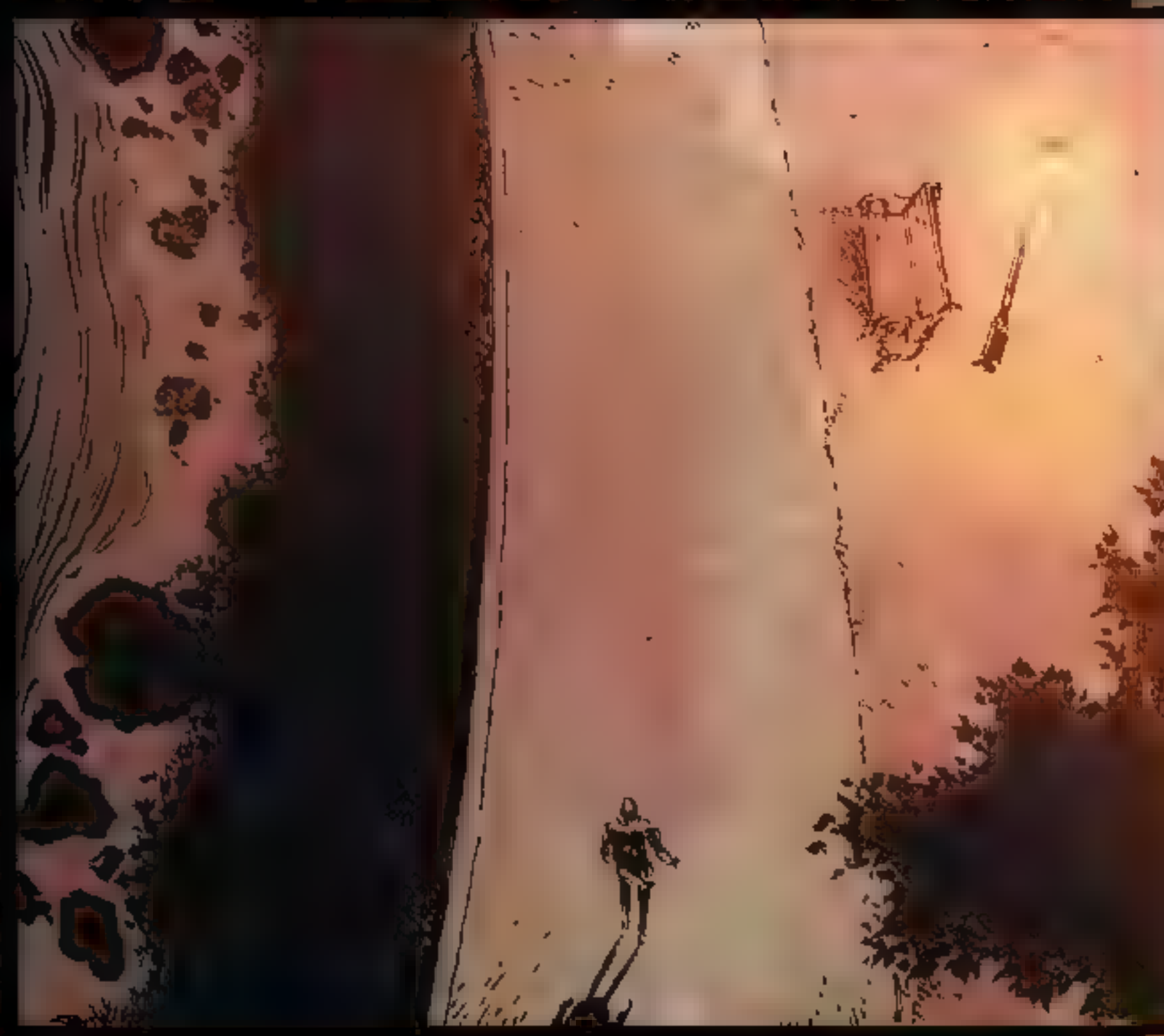
OR MAYBE THAT'S ALL THERE IS. WE JUST MAKE THE MOST OF WHAT WE HAVE, AND IT CARRIES FORWARD. *WE WERE HERE.* AND THAT'S ENOUGH. SO EVEN IF IT GOES AWAY, OR GOES BACK TO SOMETHING UGLY... MAYBE THAT'S OKAY.

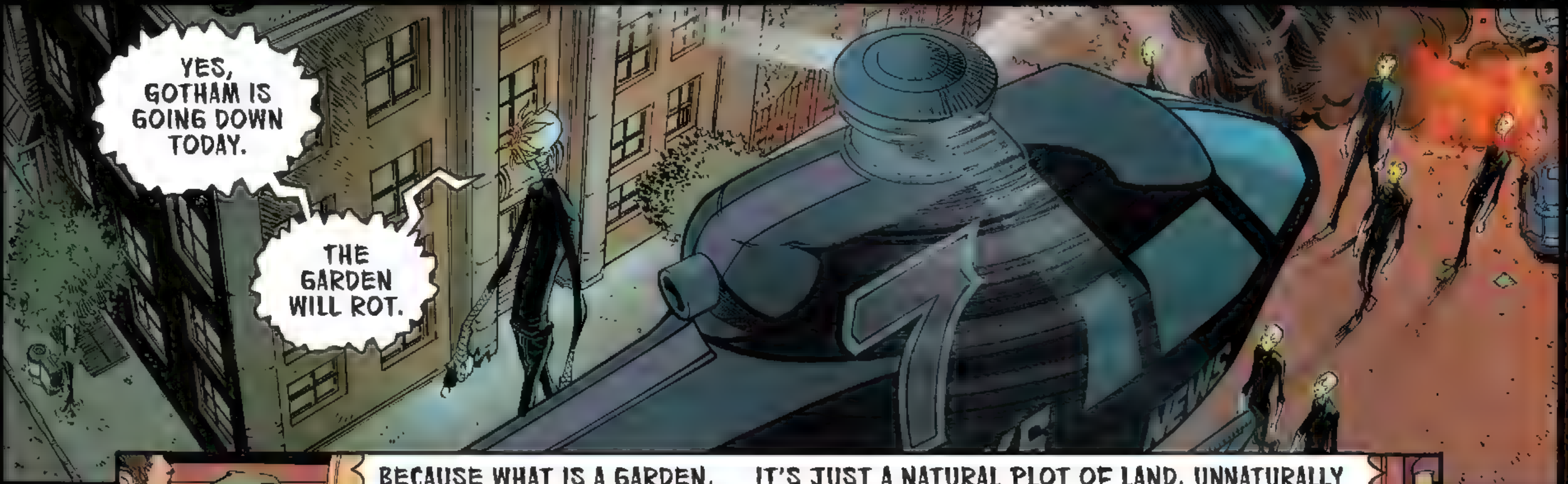
THEN AGAIN...

...WE COULD BOTH JUST QUIT WHILE WE'RE AHEAD. *Heh.*

WHAT ARE YOU--







YES,
GOTHAM IS
GOING DOWN
TODAY.

THE
GARDEN
WILL ROT.



BECAUSE WHAT IS A GARDEN,
REALLY, BUT A BIG,
BEAUTIFUL LIE?

IT'S JUST A NATURAL PLOT OF LAND, UNNATURALLY
TWISTED AND WHIPPED AND RESHAPED TO LOOK
PRETTY FROM FAR AWAY.

BUT THE
THING ABOUT A
GARDEN, IF YOU
EVER GET UP
CLOSE TO ONE?



IT'S
WARFARE,
FOLKS!



PLANTS THAT
DON'T BELONG NEXT TO
EACH OTHER, WILDFLOWERS
THAT ARE BORN COMBATANTS,
LIVING SIDE BY SIDE, VYING FOR
WATER, FOR SUNLIGHT. IT'S
ROBBERY AND MURDER...
GANG LIFE IN SLOW,
SLOW MOTION.



TAP
TAP

IS THIS
THING ON?
NO?



"SEE, I DON'T
NEED A MIC.
BECAUSE I
KNOW YOU HEAR
ME, PEOPLE...
ADMIT IT.

"IN A GARDEN, THE GARDENERS
PRETEND TO TAKE CARE OF YOU.
LOOK HOW PRETTY THEY MAKE YOUR
LIVES. THE POLICE SHOOT YOU
UNARMED. THEN SHOOT YOU AGAIN.
AND AGAIN. YOUR POLITICIANS. THEY
TAKE YOUR MONEY, AND LET YOU
WITHER. BUSINESS POISONS YOU."

THEY SAY
YOU CAN DO
WELL HERE, BUT
YOU'RE POOR AS
HELL. AREN'T
YOU?

STILL, THE
GARDENERS...THEY
PUT THEIR FAVORITES
UP FRONT. THE
BIGGEST, HAPPIEST
BLOOMS. THE DUMB,
HUNGRY ROSE.

JIM GORDON.
FORMER HEAD OF
THE POLICE.

AND THE
BIGGEST ROSE OF
ALL IS RIGHT HERE IN MY
HAND. OFFERED TO YOU.
BATMAN. THEIR BATMAN.
HE WAS THE ONE WHO
BROUGHT ME TO LIFE,
SO TO SPEAK. THE
ONE I COULDN'T
RESIST.

THEY TRIED
TO MAKE HIM OUR
SUPERHERO SO THAT
WE WOULD FEEL
SAFE WITH THEM
PROTECTING US.
WATCHING OVER
US.

NOW, THE MEN AND WOMEN BEHIND ME, MY FRIENDS, EACH IS FROM ONE OF GOTHAM'S MOST VICIOUS GANGS. EACH IS SOMEONE JIM GORDON PUT AWAY EN ROUTE TO BECOMING COMMISSIONER.

AND EACH WAS SET FREE NOT LONG AFTER. IT'S THE ILLUSION OF SAFETY. THERE'S YOUR PROOF.

SEE, THIS BATMAN, THEIR BATMAN, HE'S NOT WHAT THE REAL BATMAN WAS ABOUT. THE REAL BATMAN WAS ABOUT DOING IT FOR HIMSELF. HE WAS ABOUT TAKING POWER INTO HIS OWN HANDS. HE WAS A WILDFLOWER. A WEED! LIKE ME, LIKE YOU!

BUT MISS POWERS--

YOU HEARD ME. DO IT.

NOW! YOU GET THE SUITS OUT THERE. AS MANY AS THERE ARE HANDS TO DRIVE.

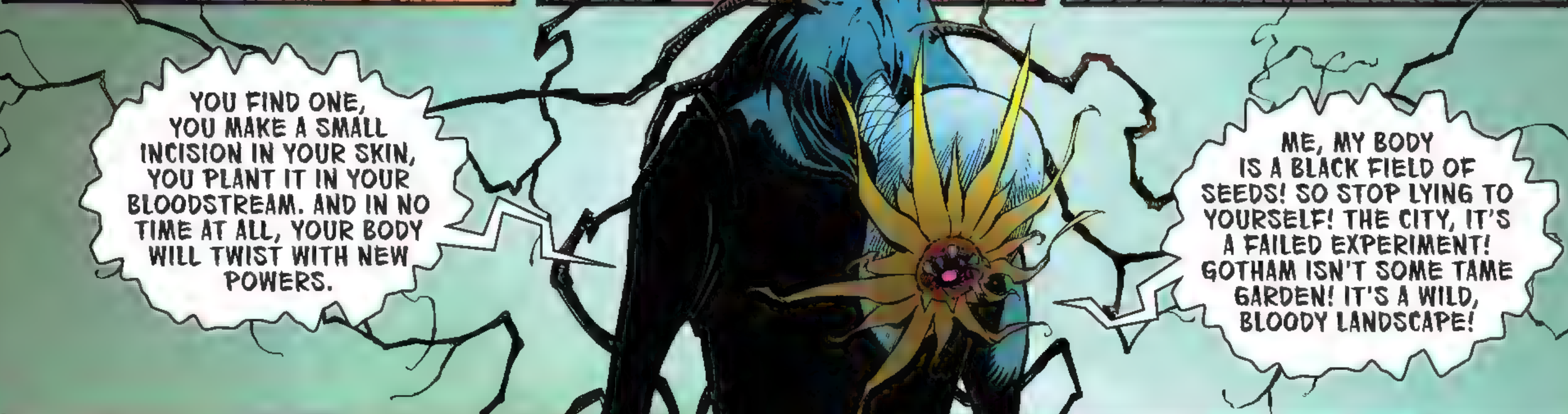
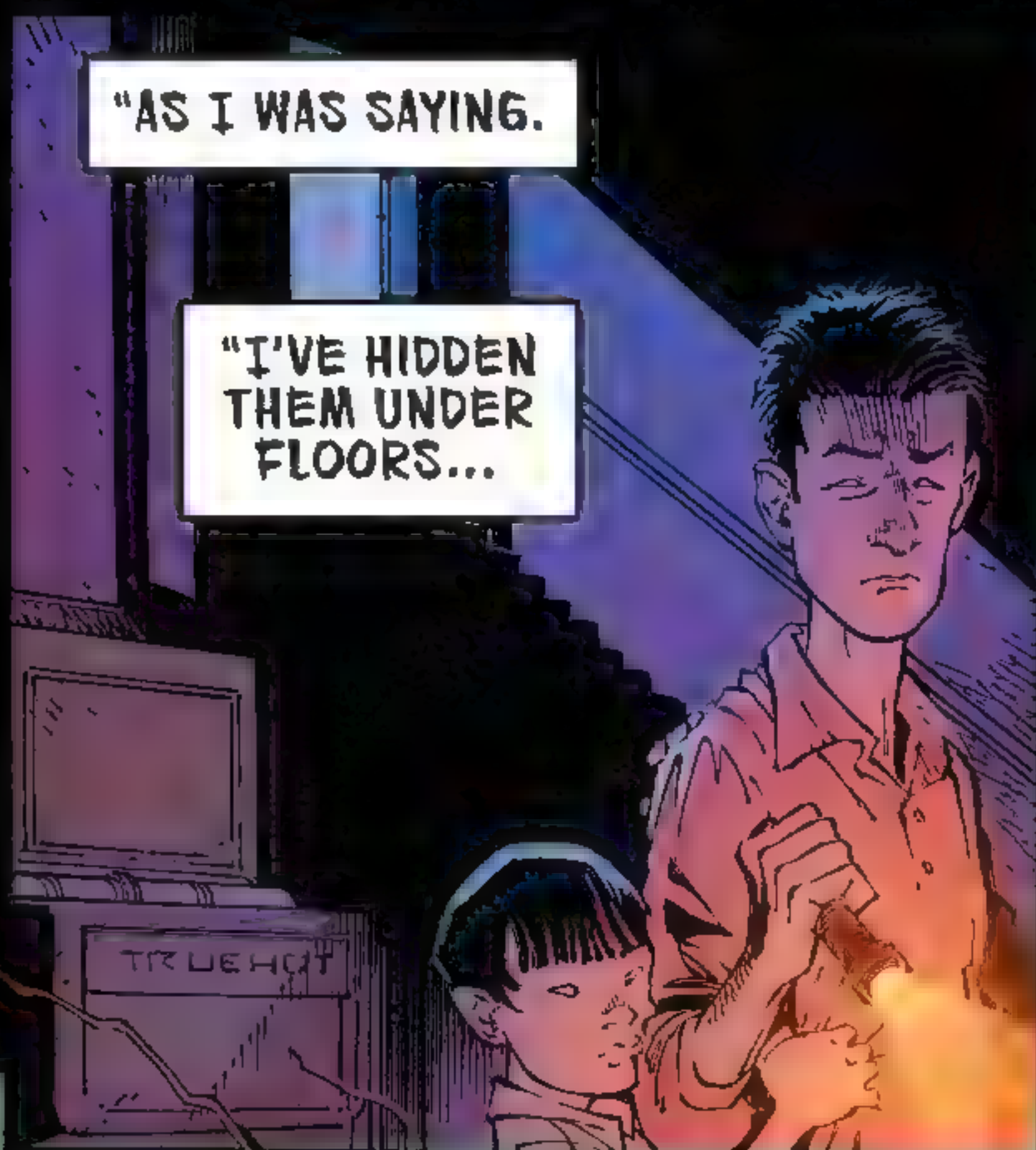
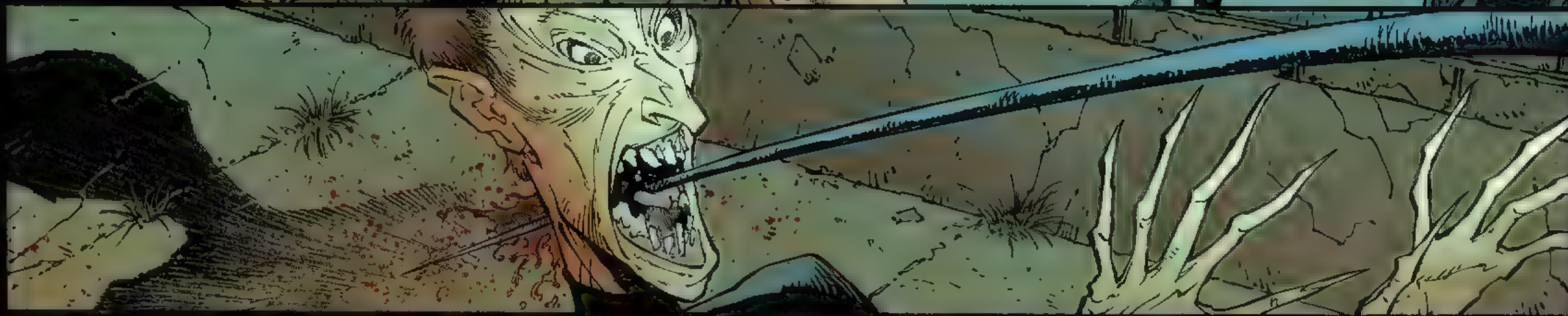
TIN BATMEN. NOW, I WORKED FOR THIS CITY MY WHOLE LIFE. I BELIEVED THE LIES. AND YOU KNOW WHERE I WAS HEADED JUST BEFORE I BECAME WHO I AM TODAY? WHERE I WAS LITERALLY BEING TAKEN, AS I LAY DYING?

THE POTTER'S FIELD. FORGOTTEN. A GRAVE WITH NO NAME. BACK TO THE DIRT.

DON'T LET WHAT HAPPENED TO ME HAPPEN TO YOU, FRIENDS. BE ME TODAY. BE THIS ME. I'LL GIVE YOU THE CHANCE.

SEE, I'VE GIVEN SEEDS TO THESE GOOD FOLKS BEHIND ME, AND TO MEMBERS OF THEIR ILK. BECAUSE I RESPECT THEIR INDEPENDENCE, THEIR GRIT. FIGHTING THEIR WAY UP THROUGH THE HARSHTEST TURF.

BUT THE THING IS, I RESPECT YOU, TOO. WHICH IS WHY I'VE HIDDEN OVER A THOUSAND SEEDS ALL OVER THE CITY.





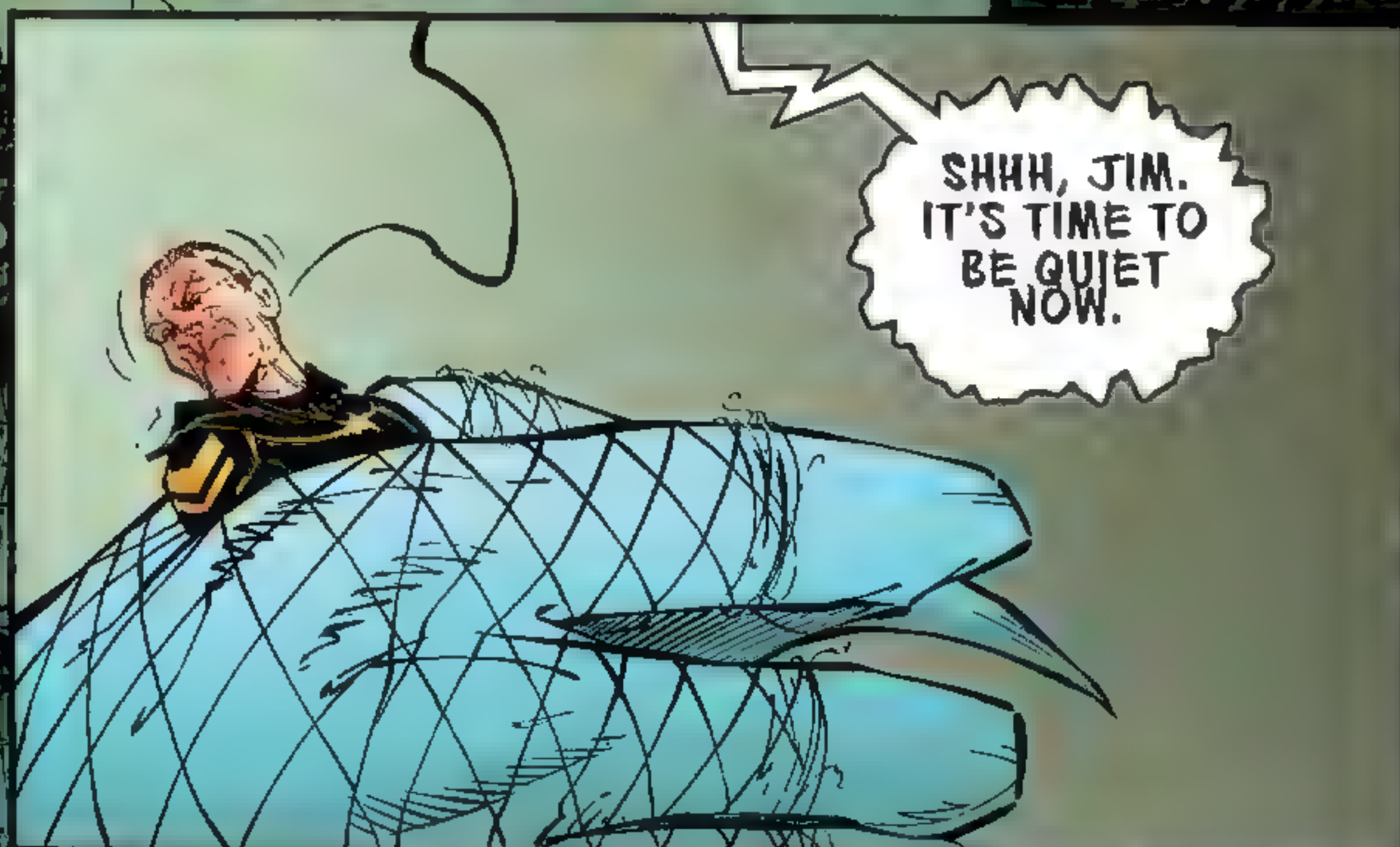
SAY IT. "DAMN
ALL OF THEM.
THERE'S ONLY ME."
SAY IT. SAY IT!

BECAUSE THE CITY
WAS BUILT ON DIVISIONS.
DEAD FLOWER DOLLS. SO STOP
WASTING YOUR LIVES! DON'T TAKE
THE PENNIES! COME TO THE LAND
OF GIANTS! GO GET WHAT'S
YOURS GET IT!

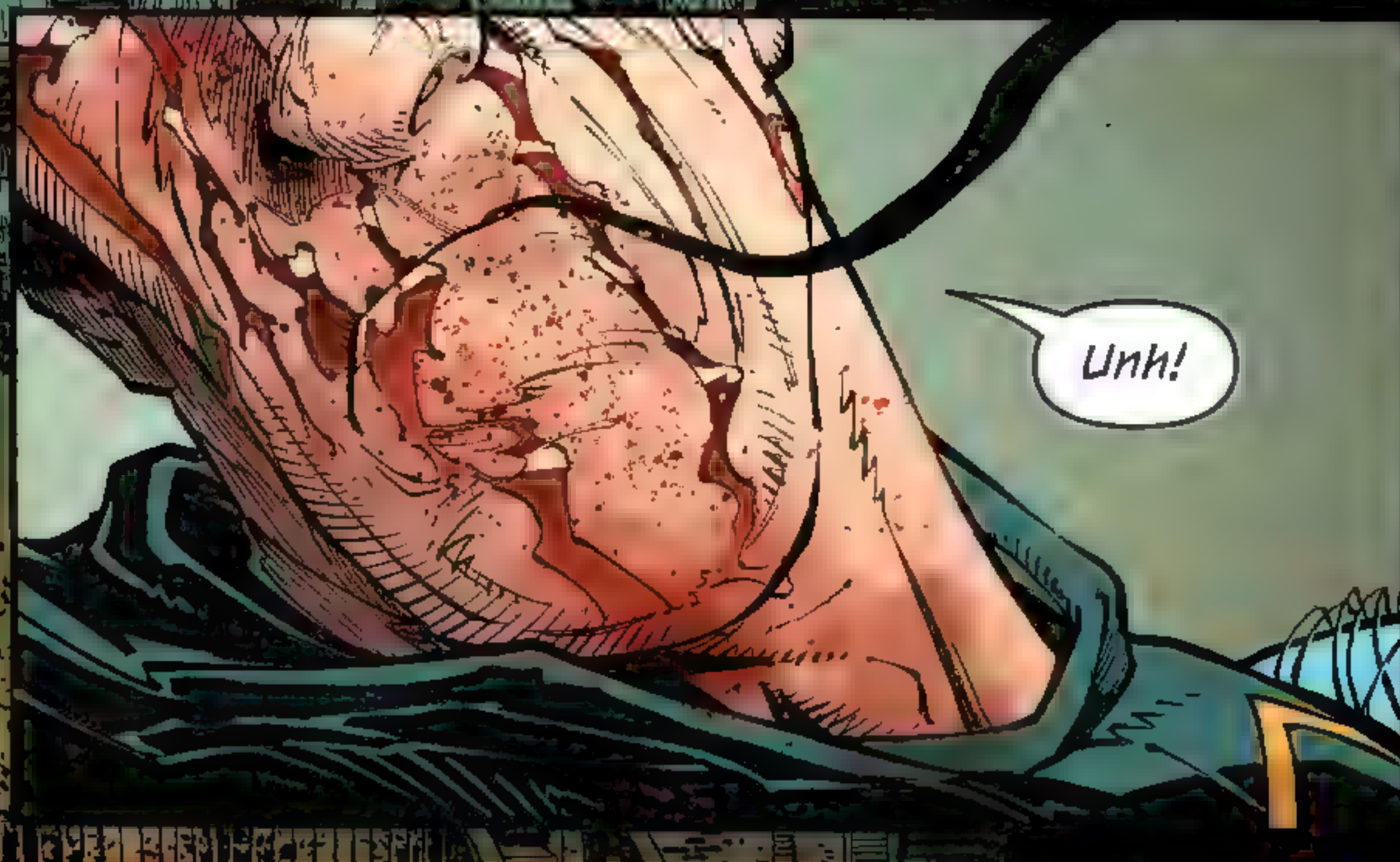
AND LET WHAT'S
HERE DIE AS IT SHOULD,
AND GROW SOMETHING
WONDERFUL IN ITS
PLACE!



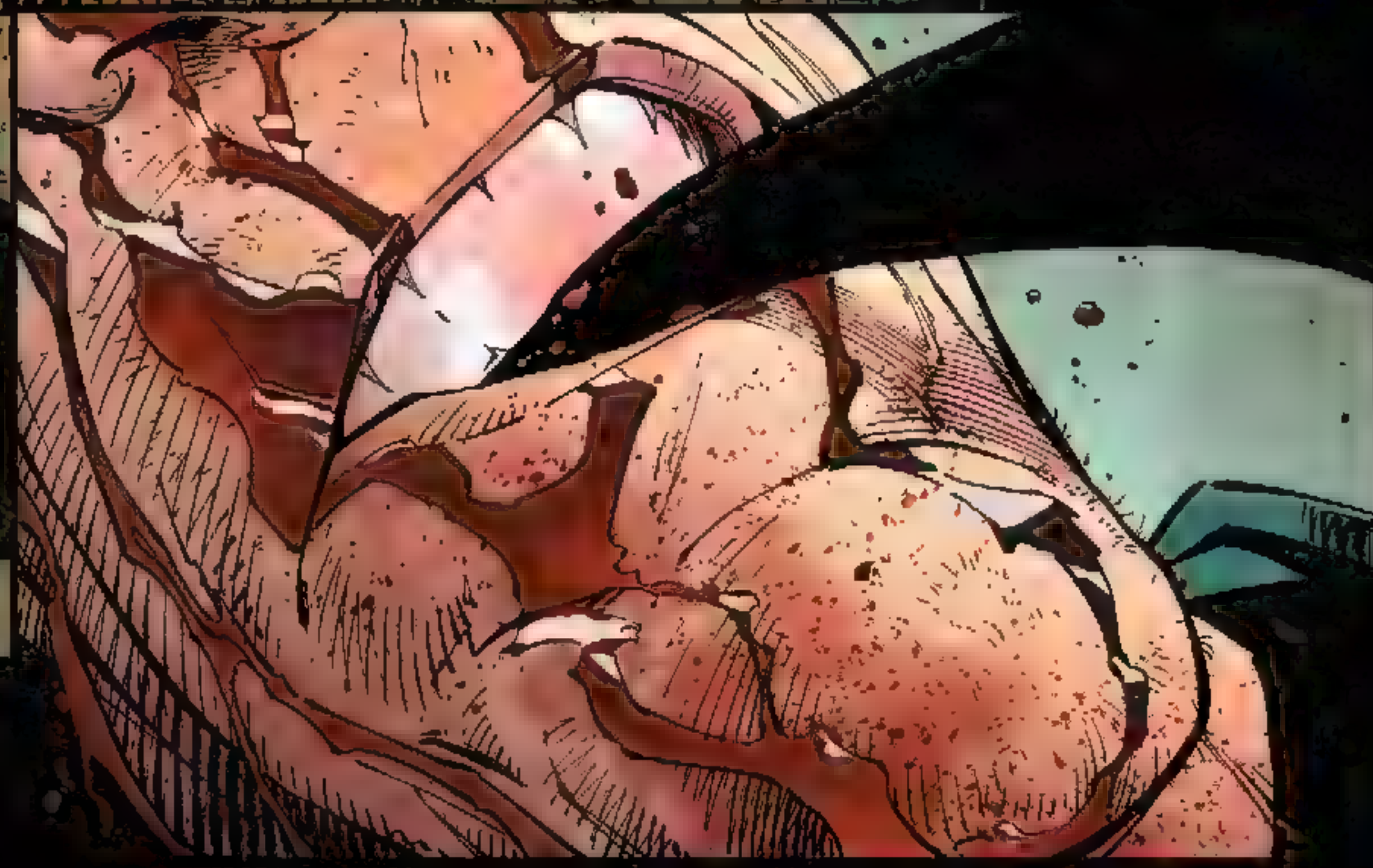
DON'T
LISTEN TO
HIM! HE'S
NOTHING
BUT A--

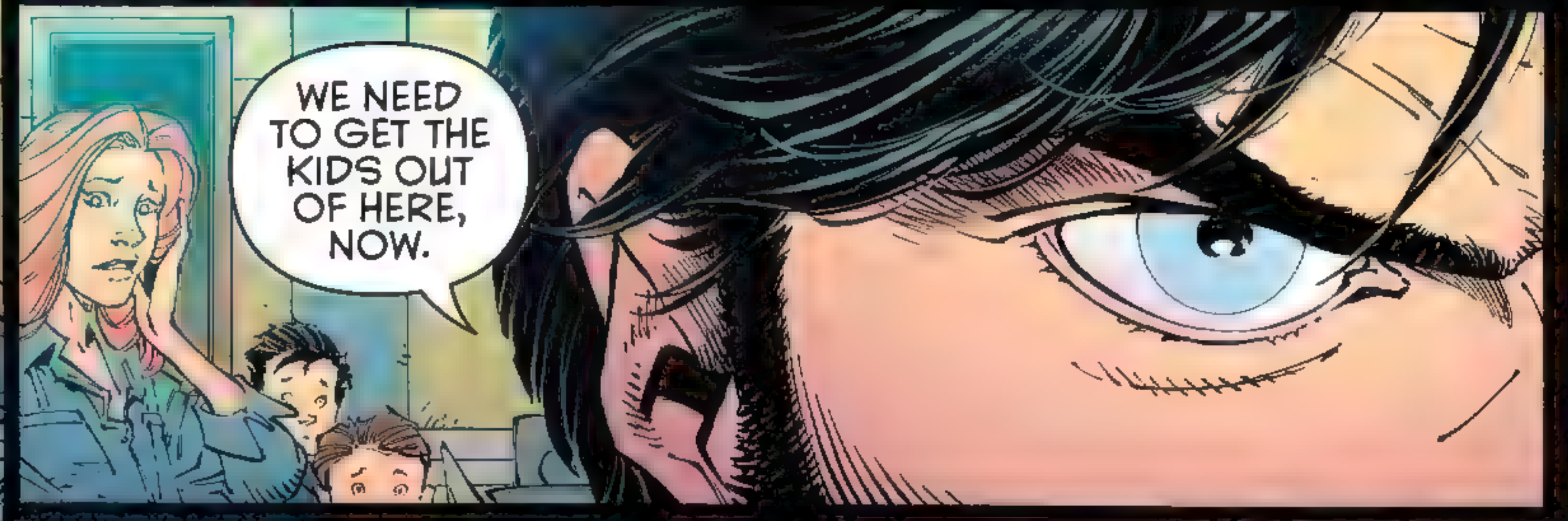
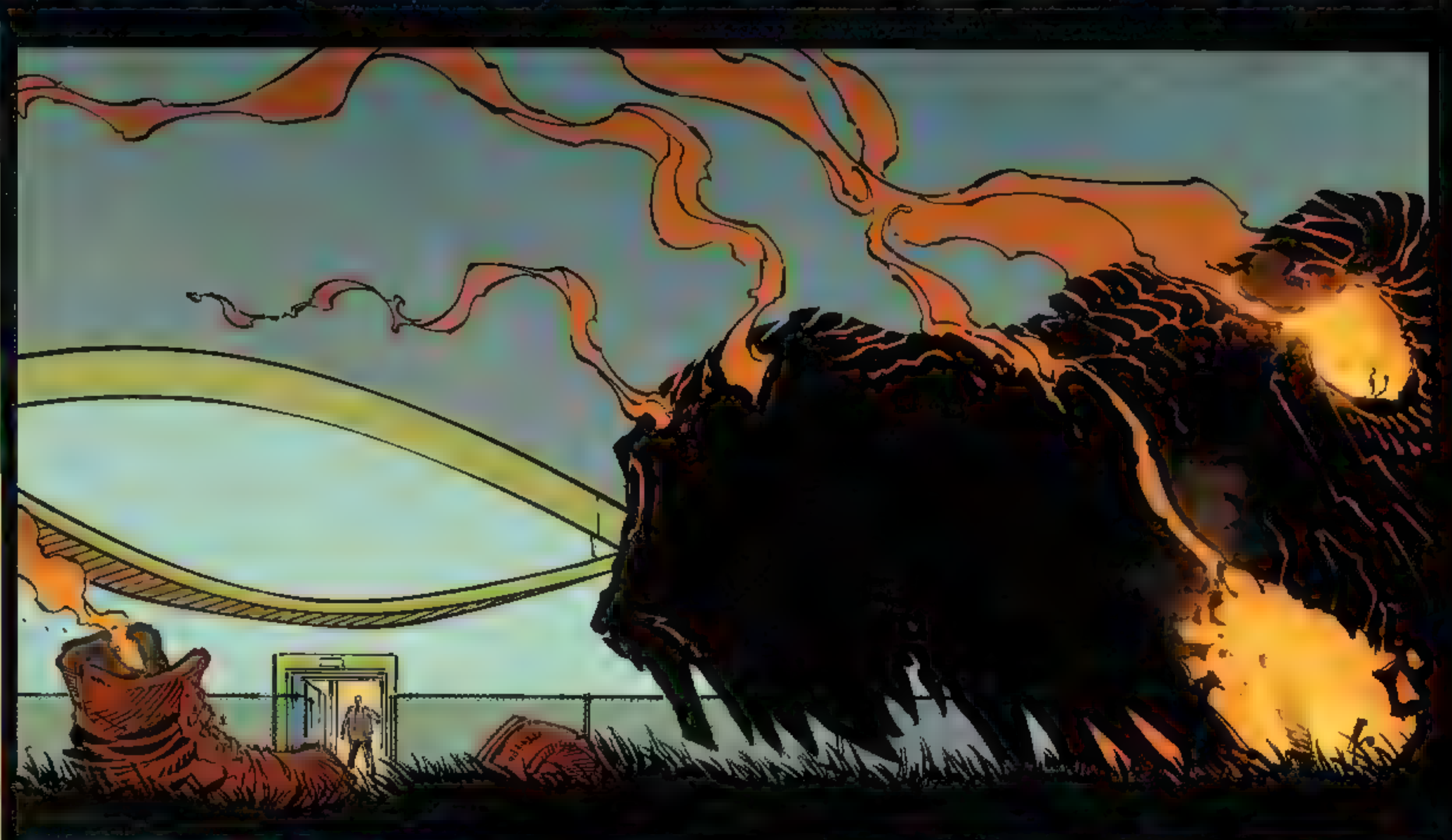
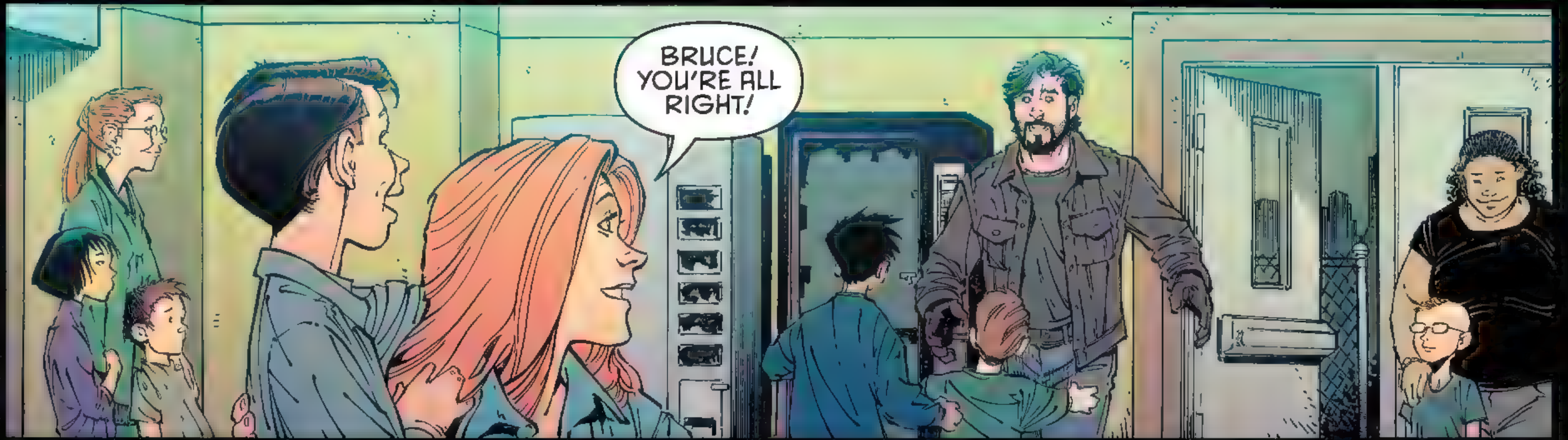


SHHH, JIM.
IT'S TIME TO
BE QUIET
NOW.



Unh!





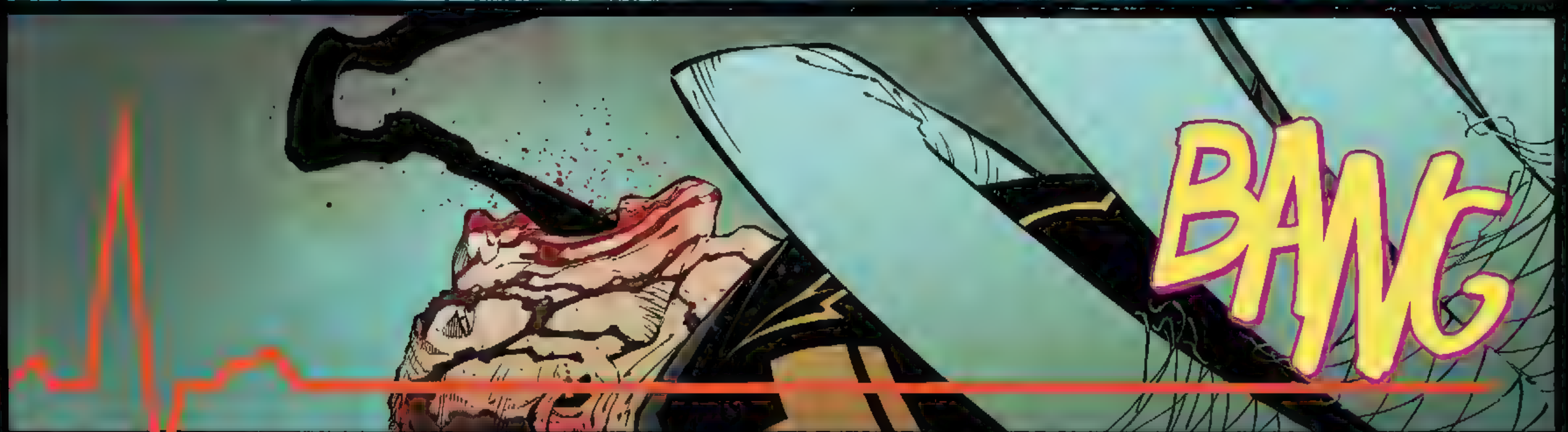
WE CAN
FIGHT HIM. I CAN
BE...I CAN DO
IT...

I
CRAAAAAANNN...

LIV?

I'LL BE
BATMAN!

KA-BOOM

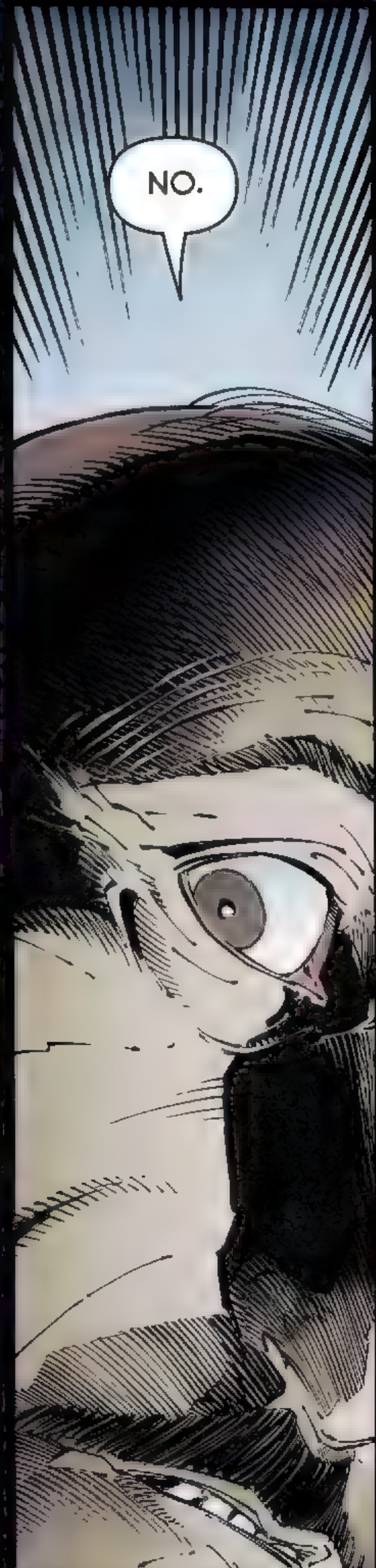




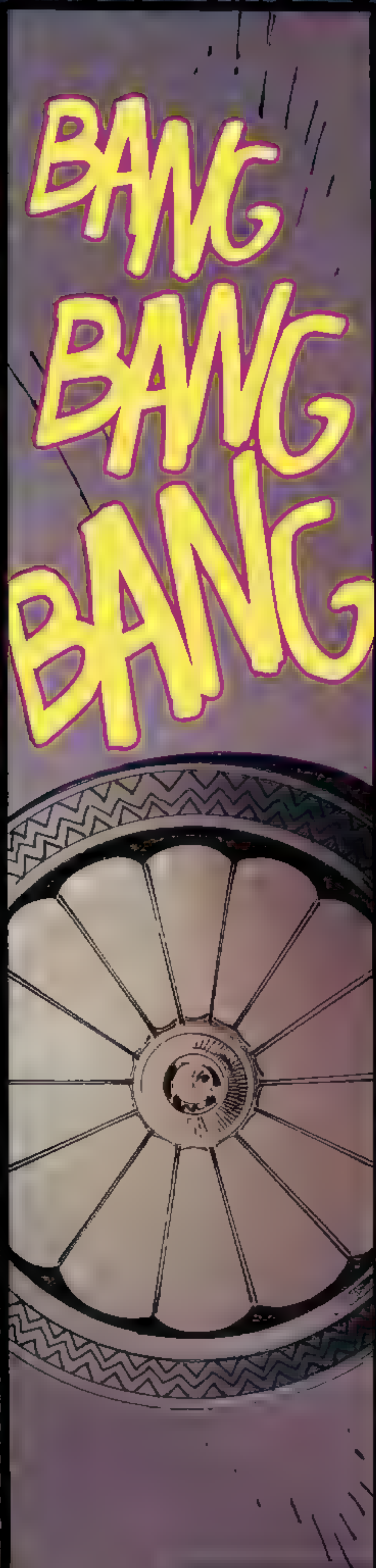
BANG BANG BANG



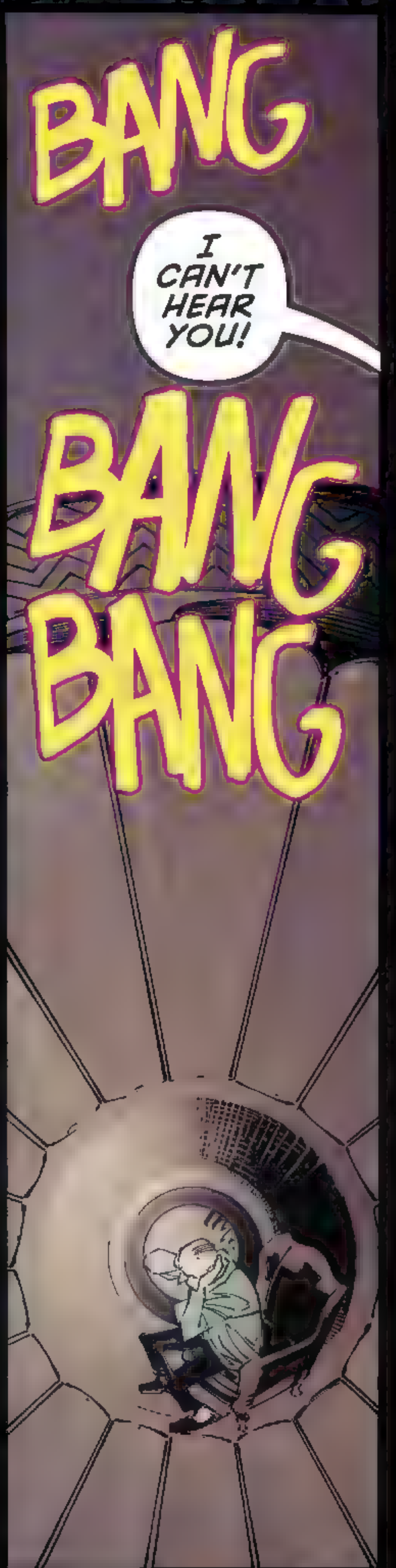
BANG



NO.

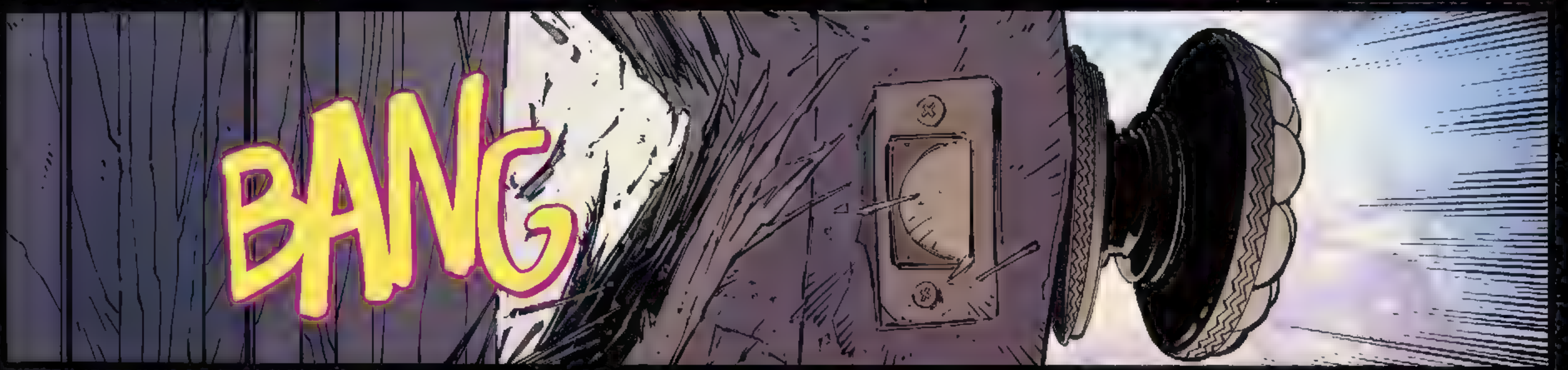


BANG
BANG
BANG



BANG
BANG
BANG

I
CAN'T
HEAR
YOU!



BANG



SUPERHEAVY

PART EIGHT

SCOTT SNYDER **WRITER** GREG CAPULLO **PENCILS**
DANNY MIKI **INKS** FCO PLASCENCIA **COLORS** STEVE WANDS **LETTERS**
CAPULLO, MIKI, PLASCENCIA **COVER** DAVE JOHNSON **ADULT COLORING BOOK VARIANT COVER**
REBECCA TAYLOR **ASSOCIATE EDITOR** MARK DOYLE **EDITOR**
BATMAN **CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER**





BRUCE...

I
KNOW.

I SAID,
I KNOW.

BRUCE,
YOU'RE--

PERIOD
HEAVY
SUPER
HEAVY
PERIOD

PART
NINE

SCOTT
SNYDER &
JAMES TYNION IV

WRITERS

JANICK PROQUETTE ARTIST

NATHAN FAIRBAIRN INK

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PROQUETTE & FAIRBAIRN COLOR

DEAL ROOMS LETTERS

COVER BY WALTER SIMPSON

PRODUCTION BY LAURA MARTIN

REBECCA TAYLOR

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MARK BOSLEY EDITOR

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE

WITH BILL FINGER

IT'S OVER, BRUCE.
YOU WILL NEVER BE
BATMAN AGAIN.





ENOUGH,
DAMMIT! I CAN
DO THIS.

I KNOW
I CAN.

MAYOR WAYNE,
THIS...THIS SIMPLY
MAY BE A JOB
TOO BIG FOR
BATMAN.

THE COUNCIL
OF OWLS
RECOMMENDS
UTILIZING THE
FULL TALON
GUARD.

NO. I DON'T
WANT THEM HARMED.
AFTER THE NOCTURNE
ATTACK, AND THE
LOSSES...THAT WON'T
BE NECESSARY.
I CAN--

SCREEEE

IT'S
HAPPENING!
THERE'S NO
TIME!

MISTER MAYOR,
PLEASE...AT LEAST
CONSIDER USING
THE GUARD!

MISTER
MAYOR!

WAYNE MANOR...

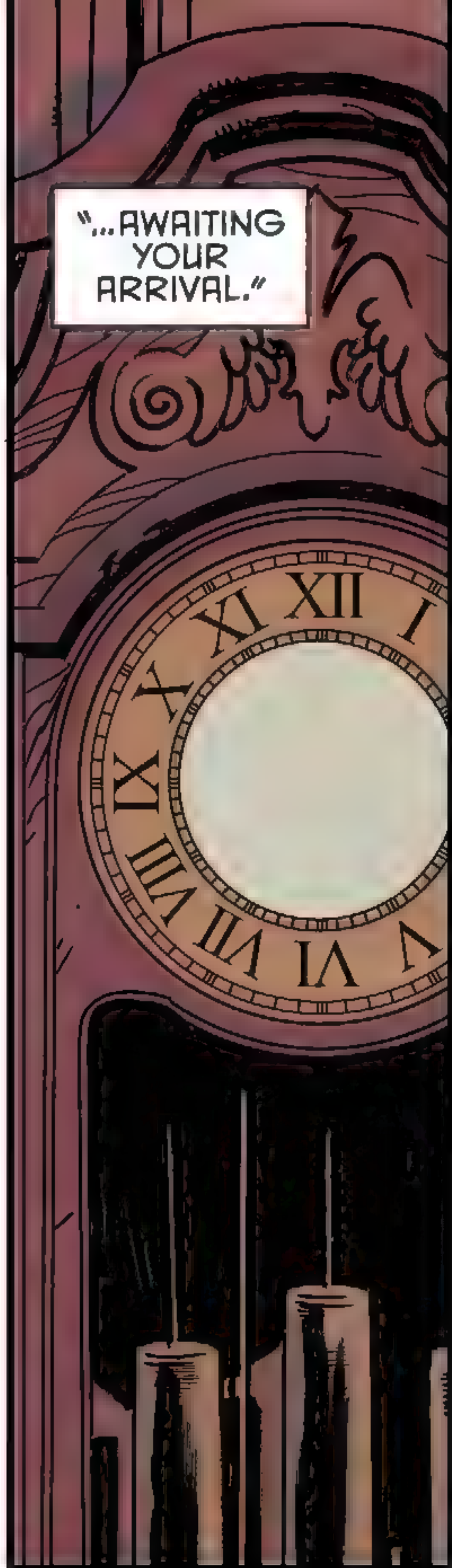




TEN
FORTY
SEVEN.

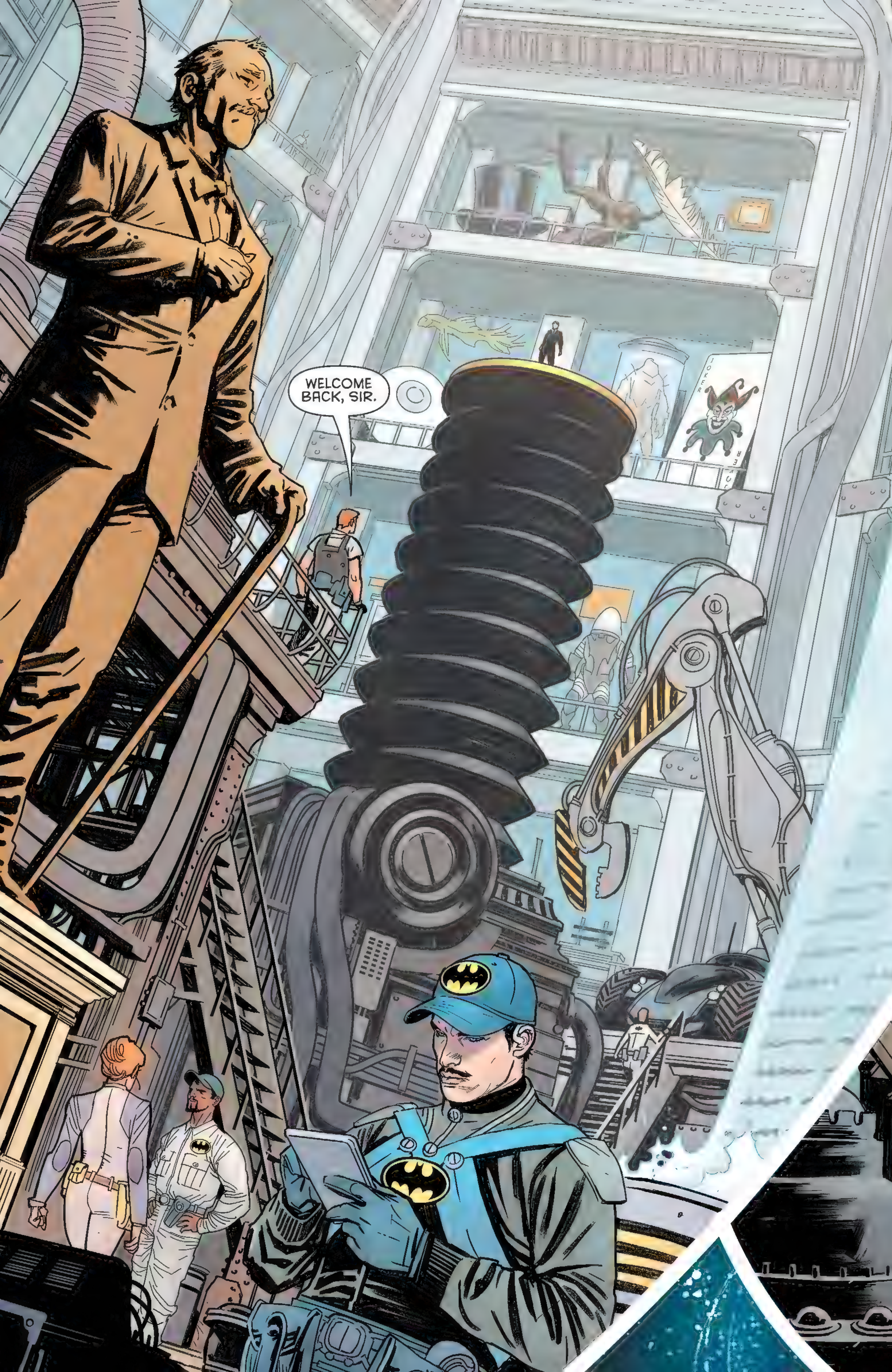
I'M ON
MY WAY
DOWN.

WE READ
YOU, SIR.
WE'RE
HERE...









WELCOME BACK, SIR.



MISTER CHILL.

WHERE IS IT NOW?

IT'S RIGHT ON TOP OF US, SIR. I DON'T KNOW HOW WE'RE GOING TO--

WE'LL DO IT BECAUSE WE HAVE TO.

DAMN RIGHT, SIR.

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? THE MEMORIAL WATERFALL WAS SUPPOSED TO BE EXPANDED BY NOW.

IT'S JUST... WE'D HAVE TO MOVE TROPHIES, SIR. AND FRANKLY...

...I WONDERED HOW GOOD FOR MORALE--

EVERYONE WHO DIED IN GOTHAM HAS A PLACE HERE. IT'S THEIR CAVE, TOO. NOW LET'S HURRY...

"...WE'RE RUNNING
OUT OF TIME."

MY
GOD...

PLEASE, SIR.
I'M TELLING YOU,
IT'S A *TOMB*. IF
YOU'LL ONLY
RETURN TO---

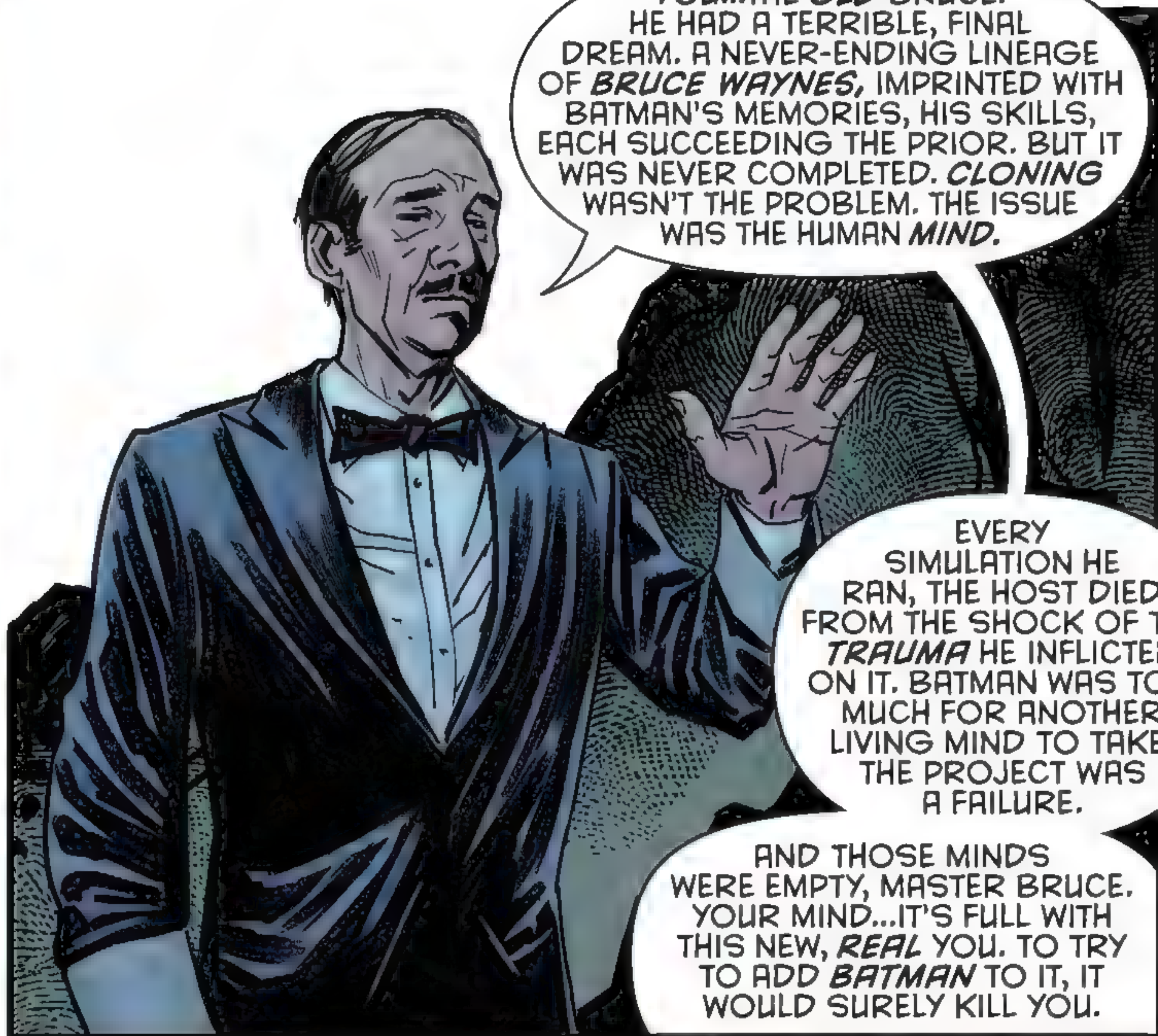
NO. GOTHAM IS
FALLING APART, ALFRED.
RIGHT NOW. THIS SECOND.
BLOOM IS HOLDING THE
CITY HOSTAGE. THE POLICE
ARE ABOUT TO MOVE IN.
ANY MOMENT NOW, THE
WHOLE THING WILL
FALL APART.

I...
I NEED
TO SEE IF
THERE'S A
WAY.



THERE. THAT'S IT. THE MACHINE YOU DESTROYED... THE ONE YOU SAID COULD MAKE ME *HIM* AGAIN. TELL ME HOW IT WORKED.

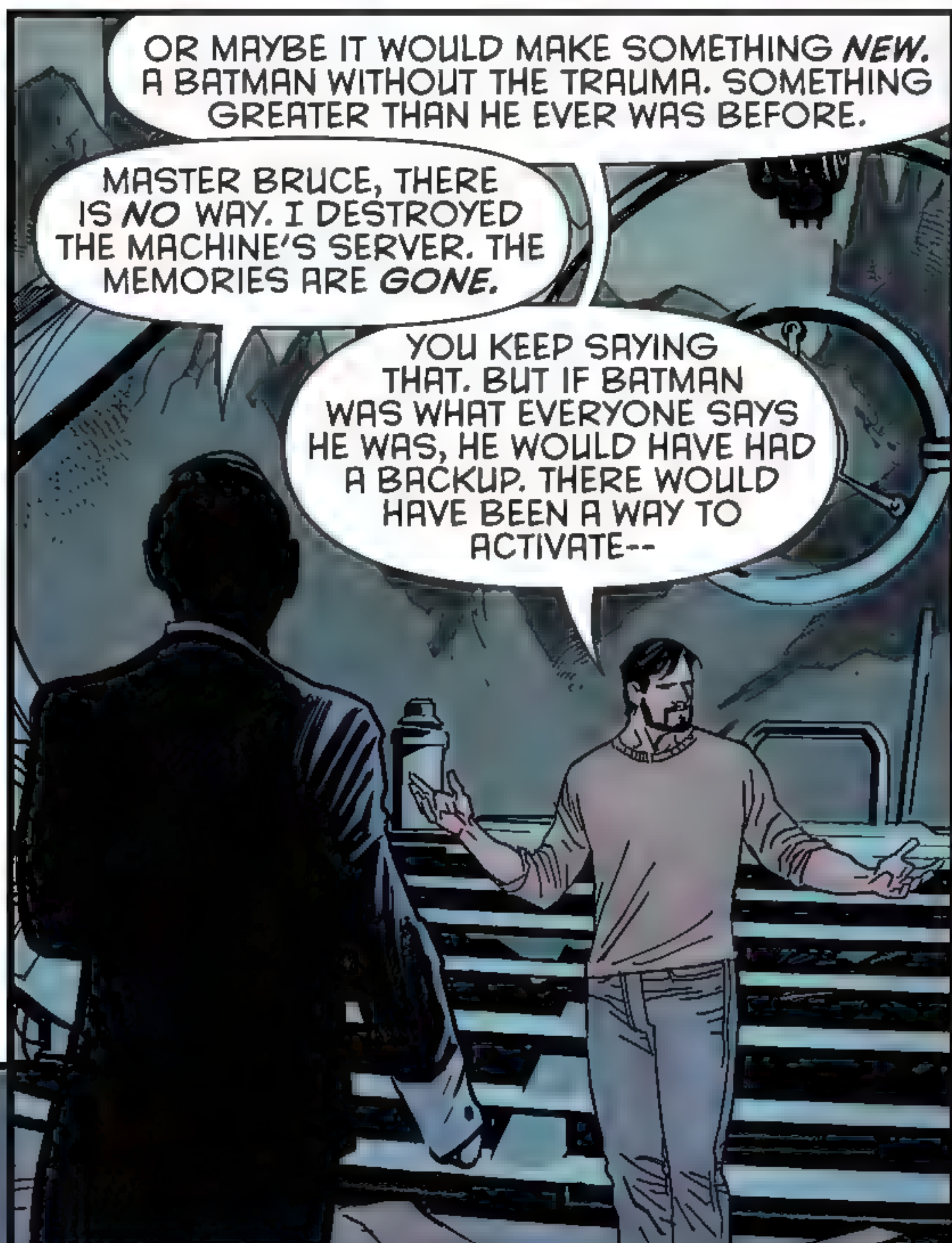
IT DIDN'T.



YOU...THE OLD BRUCE. HE HAD A TERRIBLE, FINAL DREAM. A NEVER-ENDING LINEAGE OF *BRUCE WAYNES*, IMPRINTED WITH BATMAN'S MEMORIES, HIS SKILLS, EACH SUCCEEDING THE PRIOR. BUT IT WAS NEVER COMPLETED. *CLONING* WASN'T THE PROBLEM. THE ISSUE WAS THE HUMAN *MIND*.

EVERY SIMULATION HE RAN, THE HOST DIED FROM THE SHOCK OF THE *TRAUMA* HE INFLICTED ON IT. BATMAN WAS TOO MUCH FOR ANOTHER LIVING MIND TO TAKE. THE PROJECT WAS A FAILURE.

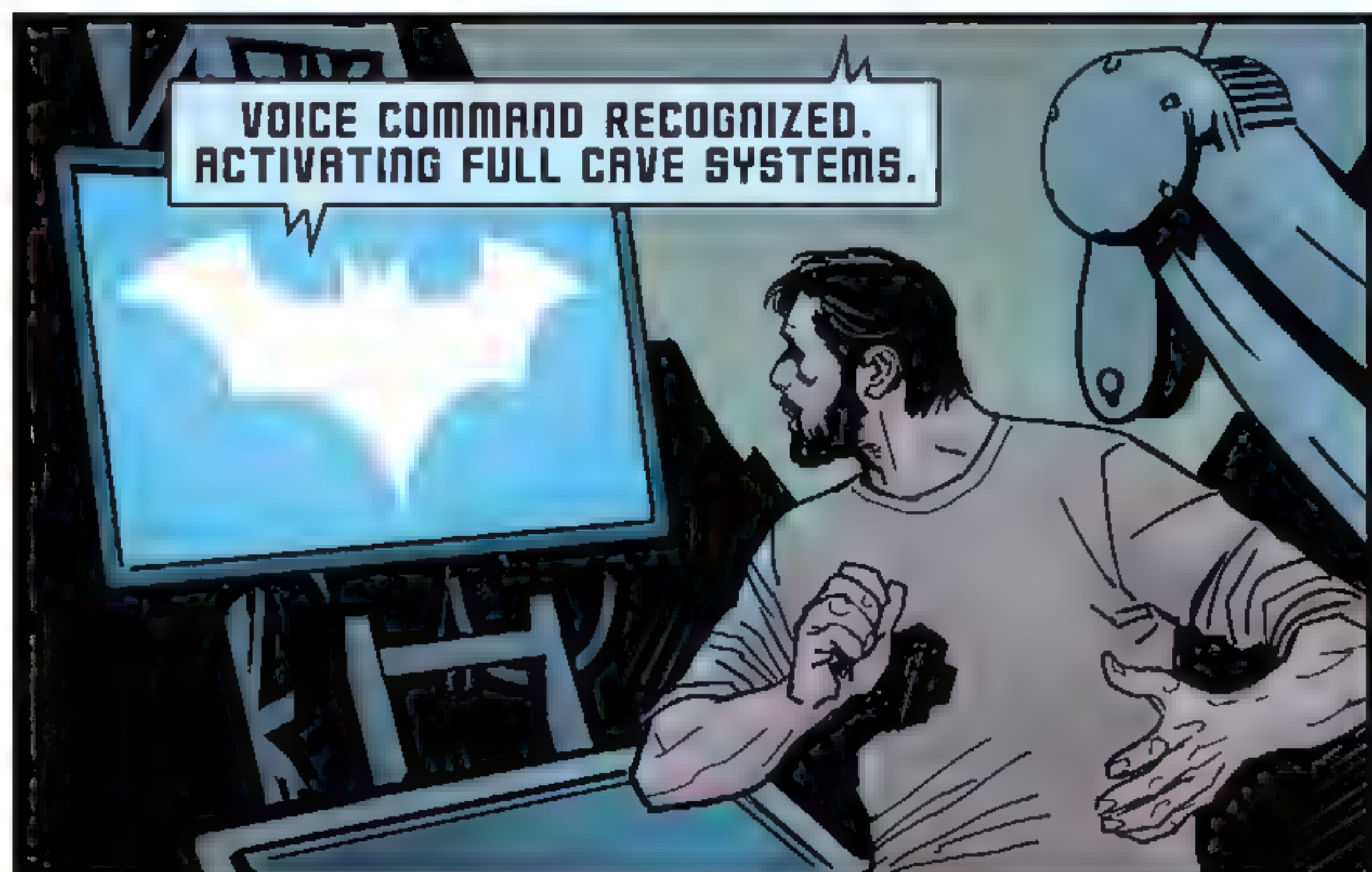
AND THOSE MINDS WERE EMPTY, MASTER BRUCE. YOUR MIND...IT'S FULL WITH THIS NEW, *REAL* YOU. TO TRY TO ADD *BATMAN* TO IT, IT WOULD SURELY KILL YOU.



OR MAYBE IT WOULD MAKE SOMETHING *NEW*. A BATMAN WITHOUT THE TRAUMA. SOMETHING GREATER THAN HE EVER WAS BEFORE.

MASTER BRUCE, THERE IS *NO* WAY. I DESTROYED THE MACHINE'S SERVER. THE MEMORIES ARE *GONE*.

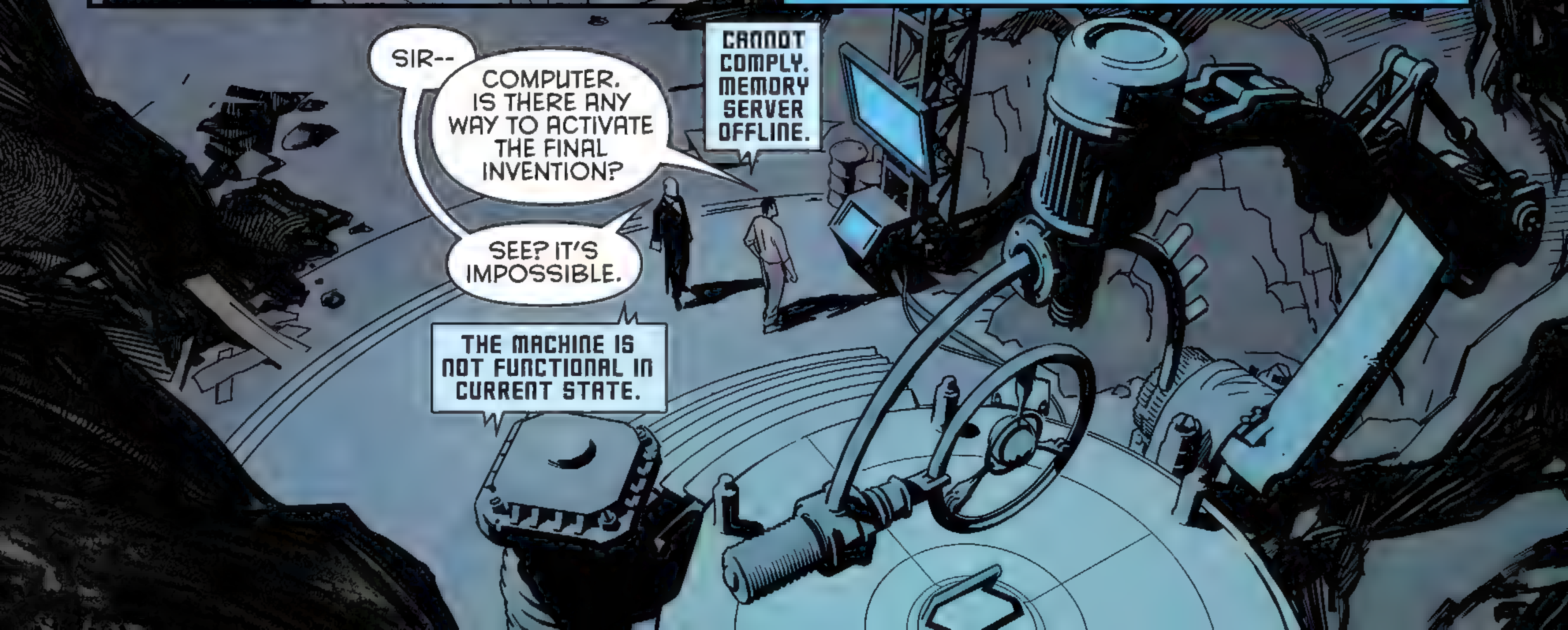
YOU KEEP SAYING THAT. BUT IF BATMAN WAS WHAT EVERYONE SAYS HE WAS, HE WOULD HAVE HAD A BACKUP. THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN A WAY TO ACTIVATE--



VOICE COMMAND RECOGNIZED. ACTIVATING FULL CAVE SYSTEMS.



WELCOME BACK, BATMAN.



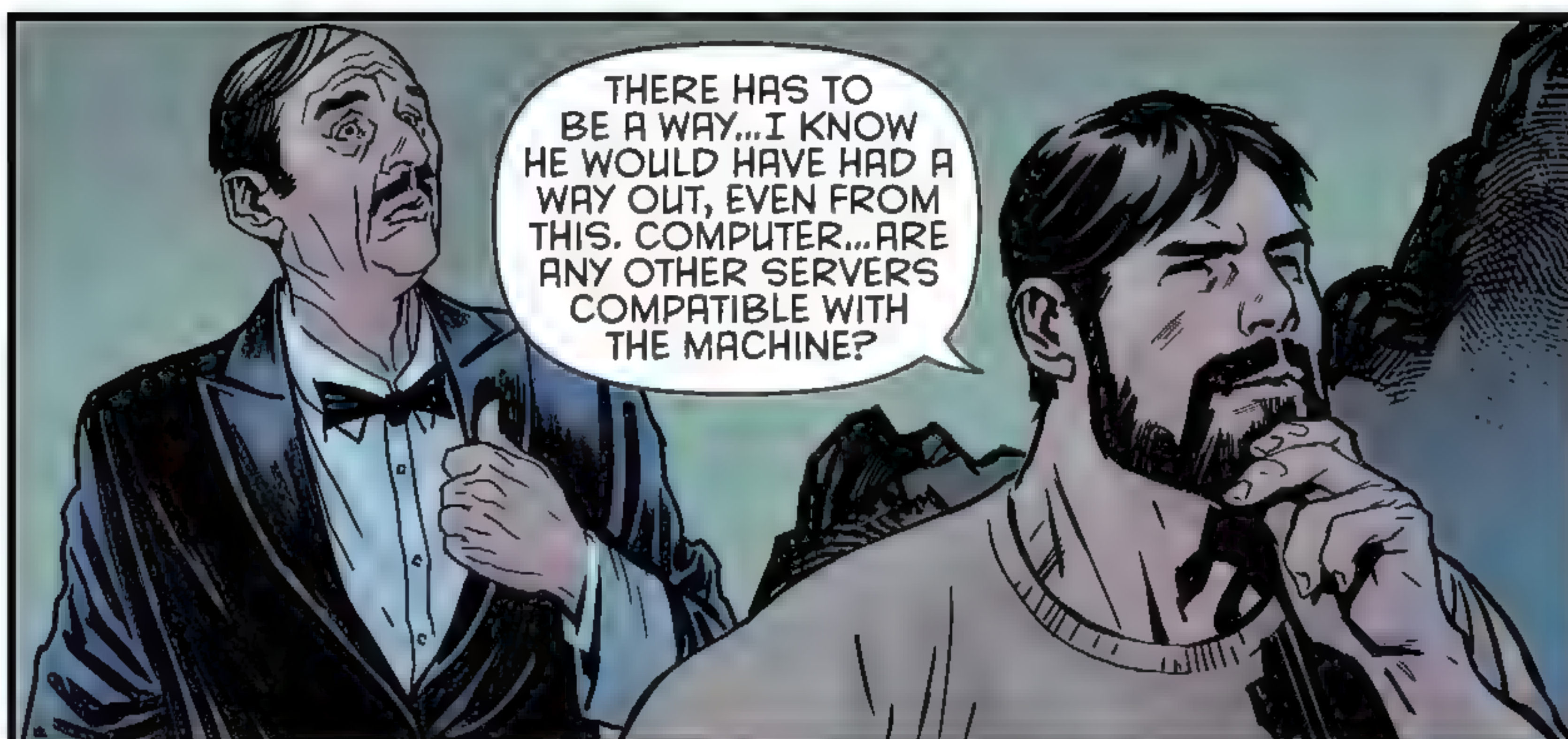
SIR--

COMPUTER. IS THERE ANY WAY TO ACTIVATE THE FINAL INVENTION?

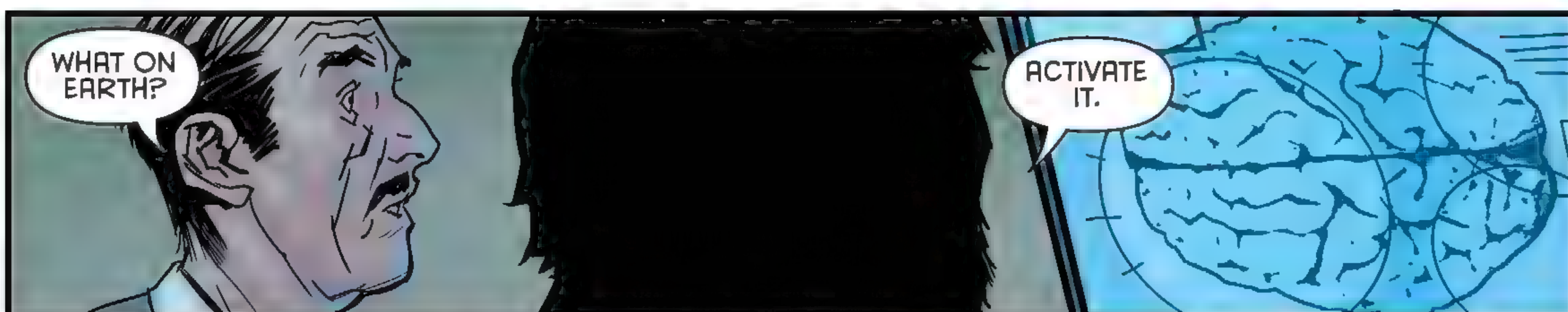
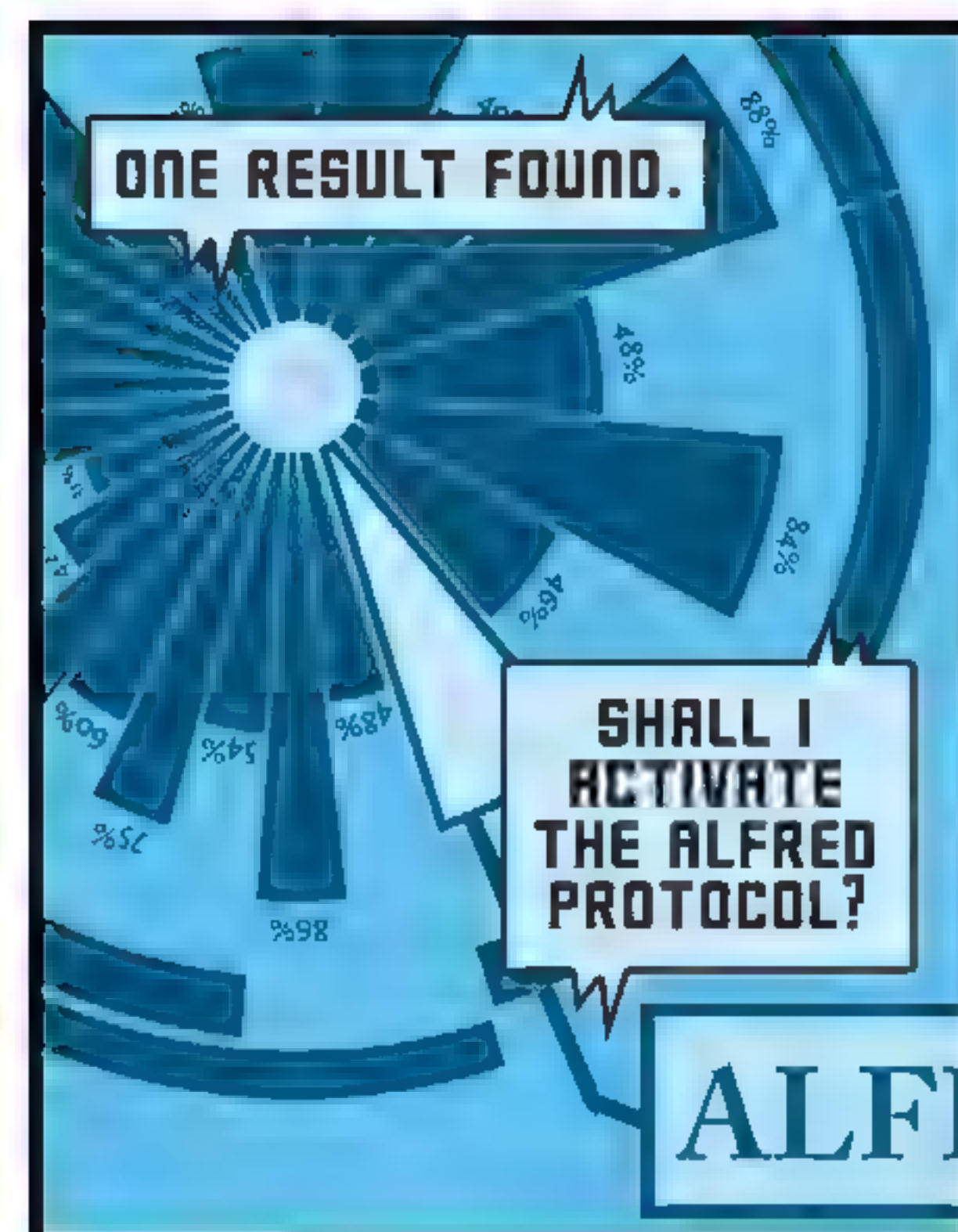
SEE? IT'S IMPOSSIBLE.

THE MACHINE IS NOT FUNCTIONAL IN CURRENT STATE.

CANNOT COMPLY. MEMORY SERVER OFFLINE.

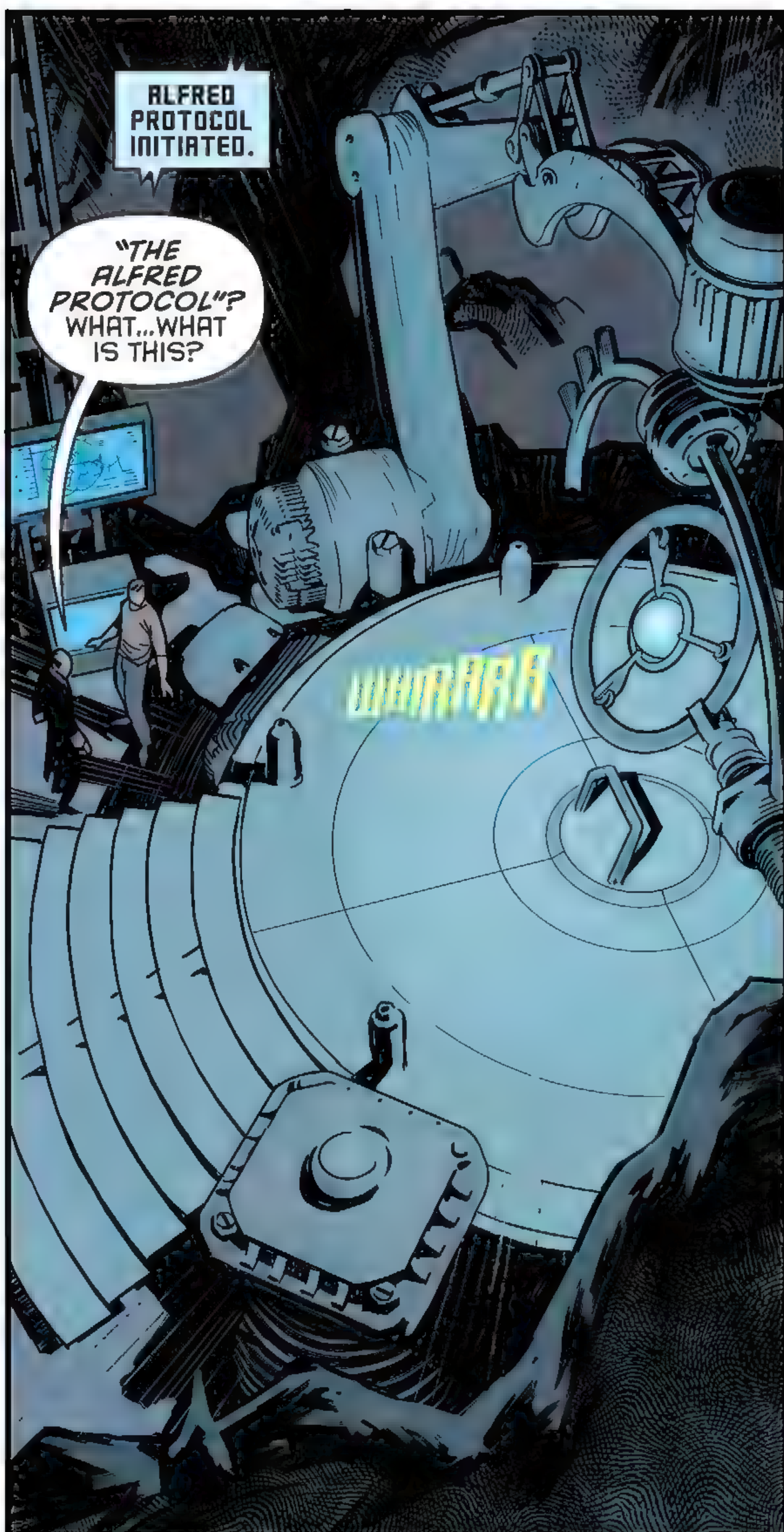


THERE HAS TO BE A WAY... I KNOW HE WOULD HAVE HAD A WAY OUT, EVEN FROM THIS. COMPUTER... ARE ANY OTHER SERVERS COMPATIBLE WITH THE MACHINE?



WHAT ON EARTH?

ACTIVATE IT.



ALFRED PROTOCOL INITIATED.

"THE ALFRED PROTOCOL"? WHAT... WHAT IS THIS?

WHIRRRR

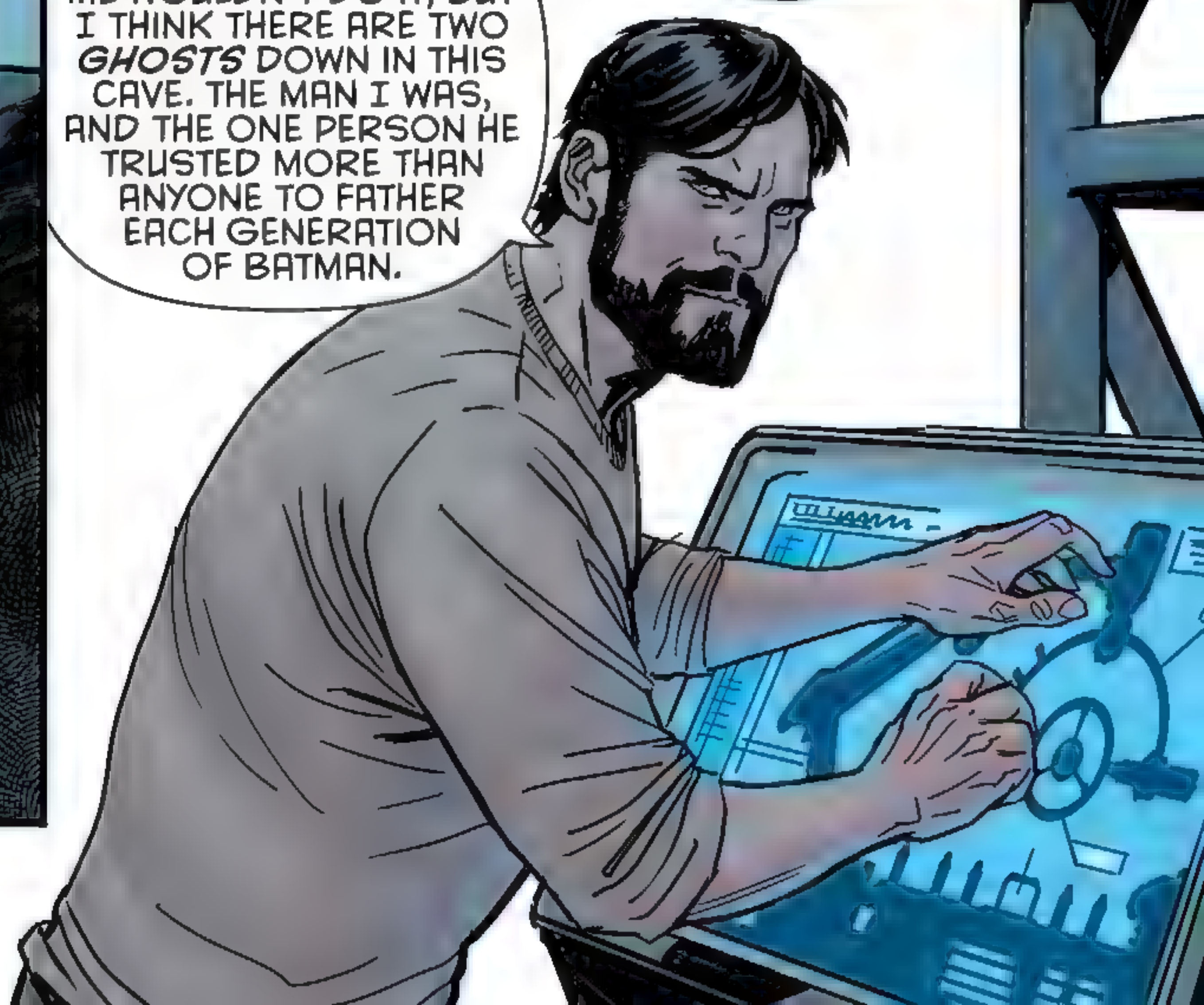


IT'S A FULL BACKUP OF THE MEMORY DRIVES... LOOK... THE LAST UPDATE WAS JUST BEFORE THE FINAL ATTACK WITH JOKER. HIS LAST MOMENT IN THE CAVE.

WHY WOULD HE NAME IT--

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WOULD ALWAYS PATCH HIM UP AND MAKE HIM NEW WHEN HE FELL. WHO ELSE WOULD HE ENTRUST THE WHOLE OF BATMAN TO?

MAYBE THE ALFRED STANDING IN FRONT OF ME WOULDN'T DO IT, BUT I THINK THERE ARE TWO **GHOSTS** DOWN IN THIS CAVE. THE MAN I WAS, AND THE ONE PERSON HE TRUSTED MORE THAN ANYONE TO FATHER EACH GENERATION OF BATMAN.



NO! YOU WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY *DIE*. I CAN'T LIVE WITH THAT. I CAN'T BE THE ONE WHO PULLS THE TRIGGER AND KILLS YOU. I *WON'T* DO IT. THINK OF YOUR LIFE. THINK OF MISS MADISON.

I *AM* THINKING OF MY LIFE, AND OF HER. AND IF THIS DOESN'T WORK, I NEED YOU TO TELL HER THAT I *LOVE* HER, AND THAT I'M SORRY, BUT I NEEDED TO TRY EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO HELP THE PEOPLE OUT THERE. SHE'LL UNDERSTAND.

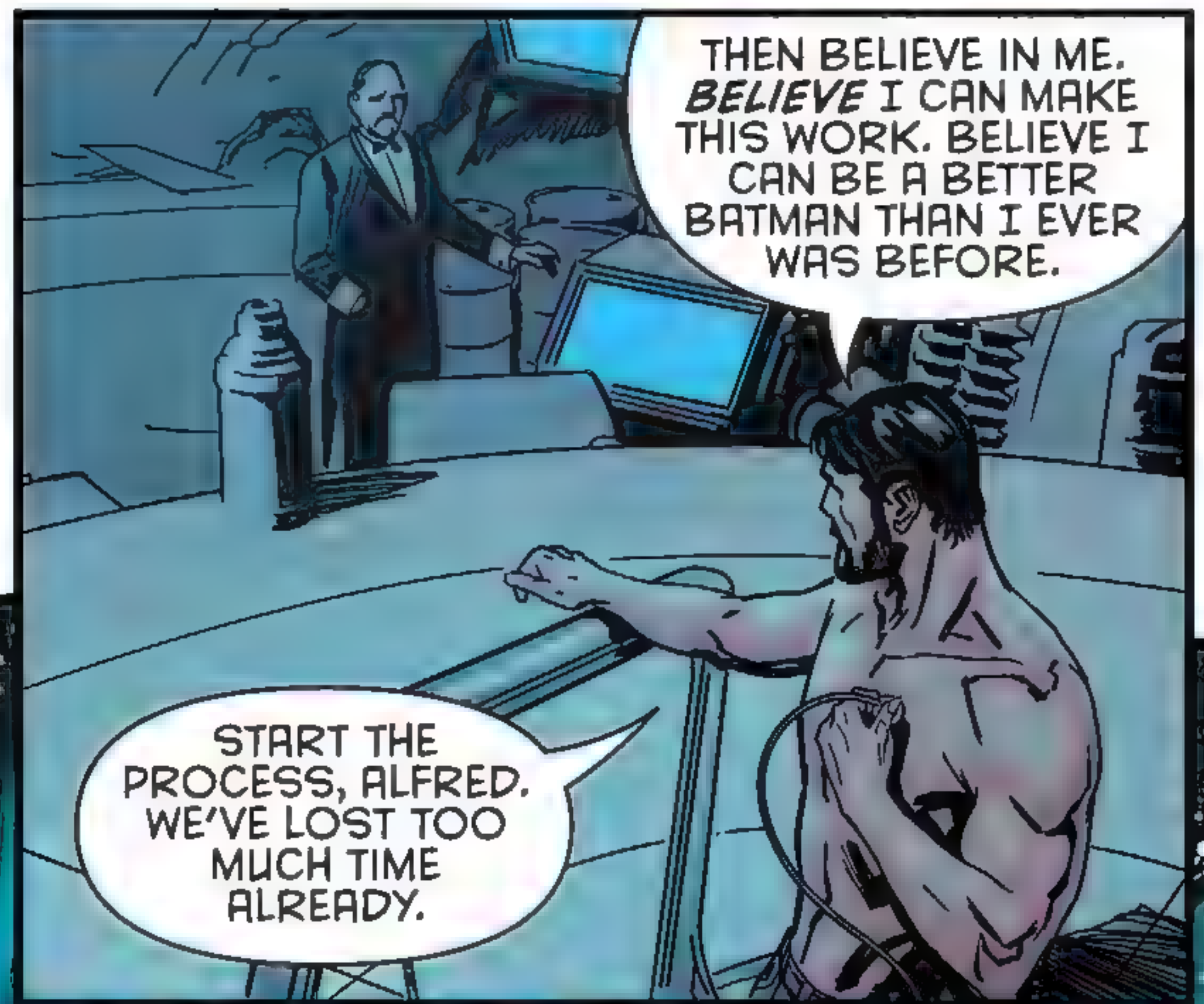
MASTER BRUCE, PLEASE...

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THERE, FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, IN BOTH OF MY LIVES. THERE TO HELP ME BECOME WHAT I NEEDED TO BECOME, BECAUSE YOU *UNDERSTAND* ME.

COULD I LIVE WITH MYSELF, KNOWING WHAT I KNOW NOW, JUST WALKING AWAY WITHOUT HAVING TRIED?

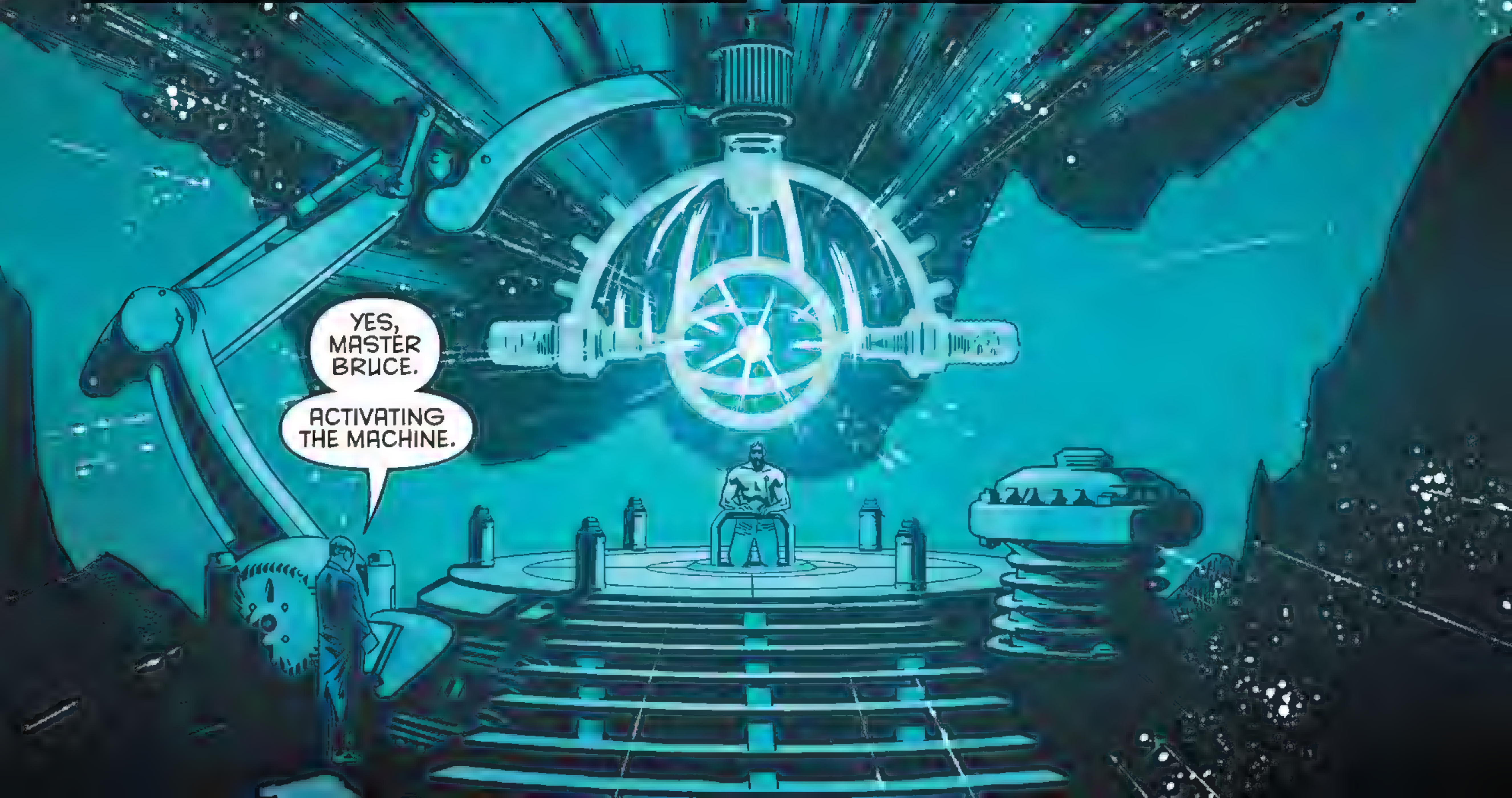


NO.



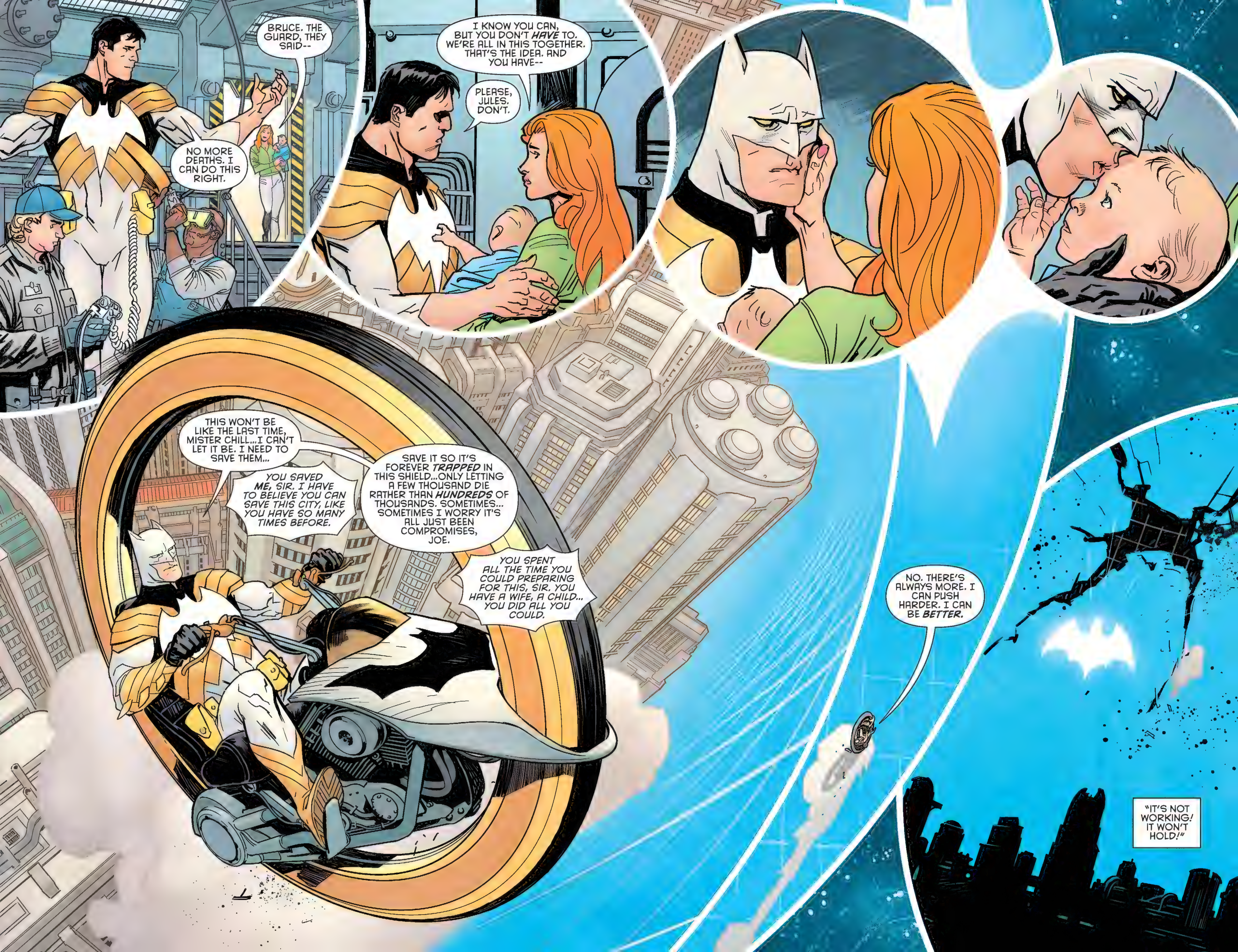
THEN BELIEVE IN ME. *BELIEVE* I CAN MAKE THIS WORK. BELIEVE I CAN BE A BETTER BATMAN THAN I EVER WAS BEFORE.

START THE PROCESS, ALFRED. WE'VE LOST TOO MUCH TIME ALREADY.



YES, MASTER BRUCE.

ACTIVATING THE MACHINE.



BRUCE. THE
GUARD, THEY
SAID--

I KNOW YOU CAN,
BUT YOU DON'T *HAVE* TO.
WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.
THAT'S THE IDEA. AND
YOU HAVE--

PLEASE,
JULES.
DON'T.

NO MORE
DEATHS. I
CAN DO THIS
RIGHT.

THIS WON'T BE
LIKE THE LAST TIME,
MISTER CHILL... I CAN'T
LET IT BE. I NEED TO
SAVE THEM...

YOU SAVED
ME, SIR. I HAVE
TO BELIEVE YOU CAN
SAVE THIS CITY, LIKE
YOU HAVE SO MANY
TIMES BEFORE.

SAVE IT SO IT'S
FOREVER *TRAPPED* IN
THIS SHIELD... ONLY LETTING
A FEW THOUSAND DIE
RATHER THAN *HUNDREDS* OF
THOUSANDS. SOMETIMES...
SOMETIMES I WORRY IT'S
ALL JUST BEEN
COMPROMISES,
JOE.

YOU SPENT
ALL THE TIME YOU
COULD PREPARING
FOR THIS, SIR. YOU
HAVE A WIFE, A CHILD...
YOU DID ALL YOU
COULD.

NO. THERE'S
ALWAYS MORE. I
CAN PUSH
HARDER. I CAN
BE *BETTER*.

"IT'S NOT
WORKING!
IT WON'T
HOLD!"



KEEP GOING! I HAVE IT THIS TIME. I CAN TAKE IT.

BUT, SIR--
DO IT! THIS WILL HOLD. I CAN SEE IT!

I CAN SEE IT!

NO!

IM SORRY!
AAAAARGH!

BRUCE!

THAT'S ENOUGH!
YOUR VITALS! YOU'RE
GOING TO DIE,
BRUCE!

I WON'T
GIVE UP!

AGAIN!

STOP IT!

WE HAVE
A CASE TO
SOLVE,
DETECTIVE
WAYNE.

THAT WE
DO, MISTER
GORDON.

WE'LL BE
SAFE HERE, MY
BATMEN.

IF WE CAN
SEAL THIS
OFF, IT MIGHT
WORK.

AAAAAAGH!

AAAAAAAIN...

AGAINNN...

SIR,
PLEASE!
IT'S RIPPING
YOUR MIND
APART...

AGAIN!

LISTEN TO ME!
IT WON'T **WORK!** BRUCE,
IT'S GOING TO **KILL** YOU!
EVERY TIME WE RESET THE
MACHINE, IT PULLS YOU BACK
FROM THE BRINK OF BRAIN
DEATH. BUT EVERY CYCLE IT
LOOMS CLOSER AND
CLOSER.

IT'S JUST LIKE
BEFORE...THE **LIVING**
BRAIN CAN'T HANDLE
WHAT BATMAN **WAS!** EACH
TIME WE SMASH YOUR
MIND AGAINST IT, IT TEARS
MORE OF YOU TO
SHREDS.

**NO!
AGAIN!**

I WON'T JUST
STAND HERE AND
WATCH YOU DIE. EVEN
THE MAN YOU WERE
UNDERSTOOD WE
COULD NEVER PUSH
PAST DEATH.

THAT'S
IT.

ALFRED, RUN THE
SYSTEM FASTER! GIVE
IT MORE POWER. WHEN I
DIE, WHEN I REACH THE
MOMENT OF FULL BRAIN
DEATH, YOU RUN IT ONE
MORE TIME, AT FULL
STRENGTH!

MASTER
BRUCE--

LISTEN TO ME,
DAMMIT! YOU SAID IT
YOURSELF. HE NEVER RAN THE
SIMULATIONS PAST **BRAIN DEATH**,
BECAUSE BATMAN DOESN'T KILL.
BUT THE MOST RECEPTIVE BRAIN
WOULD BE FULLY **BLANK**, NO SELF
INSIDE. HE DOESN'T KILL, BUT HE
DOES! HE **HAS** TO. FOR BATMAN
TO LIVE, **BRUCE WAYNE**
ALWAYS HAS TO DIE!

I...I
CAN'T.

NO. YOU
LISTEN. YOU'RE
ASKING ME TO KILL
THAT BOY. THAT BOY
I GAVE MY ENTIRE
LIFE FOR.

I CAN'T PRESS
THIS BUTTON, SIR.
I'M TURNING IT OFF!
I WON'T TURN IT UP!
I WON'T KILL
YOU!

PLEASE!

I'LL
DO IT.

ALFRED,
IT'S THE
ONLY WAY.
YOU **KNOW**
IT IS!

I HAVE SPENT MY
ENTIRE ADULT LIFE WITH
THE HOPELESS TASK OF
FANNING THE **GLIMMERS**
OF LIGHT, THE FAINTEST
TRACES OF THE BOY THAT
BRUCE WAYNE WAS
INSIDE OF WHAT
HE BECAME.

I SPENT
MY LIFE WAITING
FOR **YOU**. THE REAL
YOU. THE ONE WHO
NEVER SET FOOT IN
CRIME ALLEY.

AND NOW...YOU'RE
ASKING ME TO PLAY THE
PART OF **CHILL**. TO PULL
THE TRIGGER. NOT JUST
TWICE, BUT THREE
TIMES.



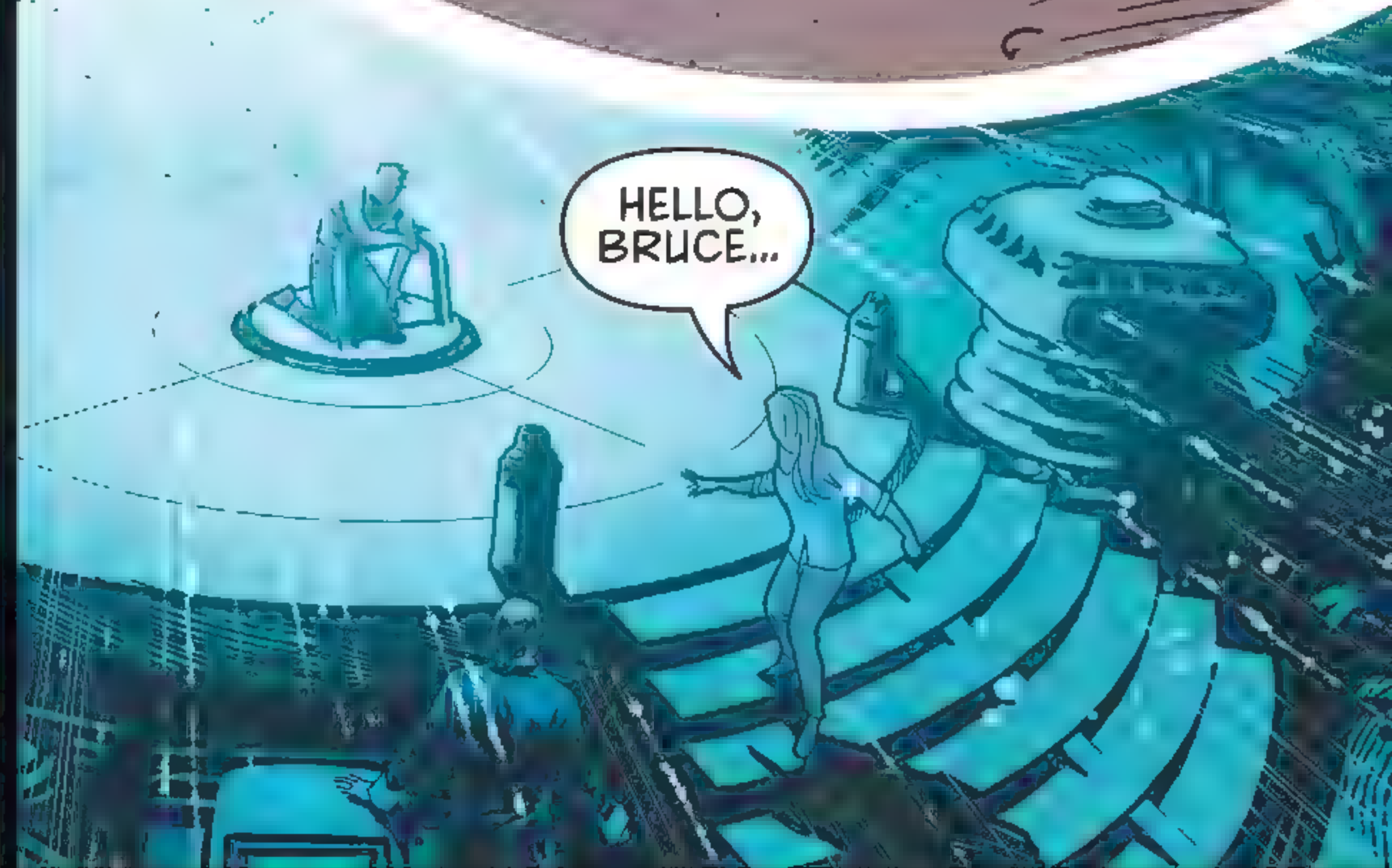
I WILL.

MISS
MADISON...



J-JULIE?

IS THAT
YOU?



HELLO,
BRUCE...



HOW...HOW
LONG HAVE
YOU--

I'VE ALWAYS
KNOWN. OF COURSE
I'VE ALWAYS
KNOWN.



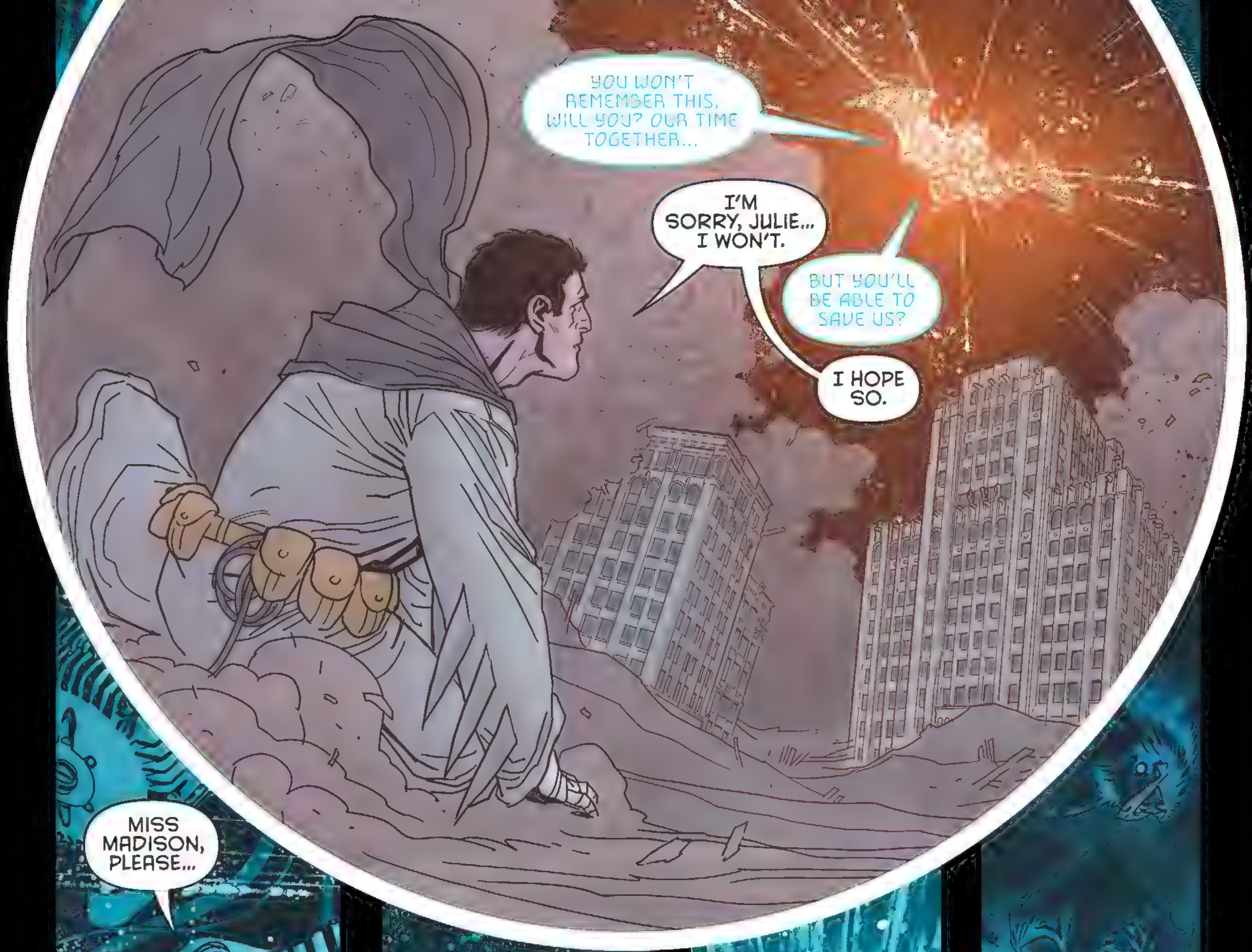
HOW...
→Unk← HOW
BAD IS IT OUT
THERE?

BAD, BRUCE.
OLIVIA...SHE'S *GONE*.
IT'S CHAOS IN THE
STREETS. BLOOM
SEEMS LIKE HE'S
EVERYWHERE.

THEY'RE
TEARING
THE CITY
APART.

I *HAVE*
TO DO
THIS.

I KNOW
YOU DO.



YOU WON'T REMEMBER THIS, WILL YOU? OUR TIME TOGETHER...

I'M SORRY, JULIE... I WON'T.

BUT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SAVE US?

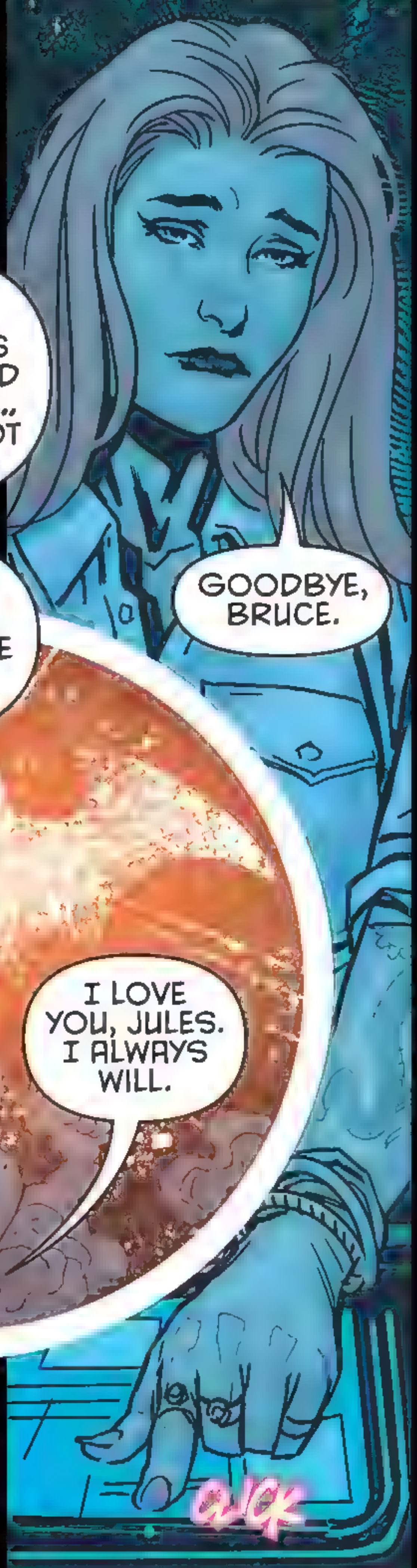
I HOPE SO.

MISS MADISON, PLEASE...



YOU SAID WHOEVER PRESSED THIS BUTTON WOULD BE *JOE CHILL*... BUT THAT'S NOT QUITE IT.

LIKE *FATHER* LIKE DAUGHTER, I GUESS. THE CIRCLE NEEDS TO CLOSE. WE ALL NEED TO PLAY OUR PARTS.



GOODBYE, BRUCE.



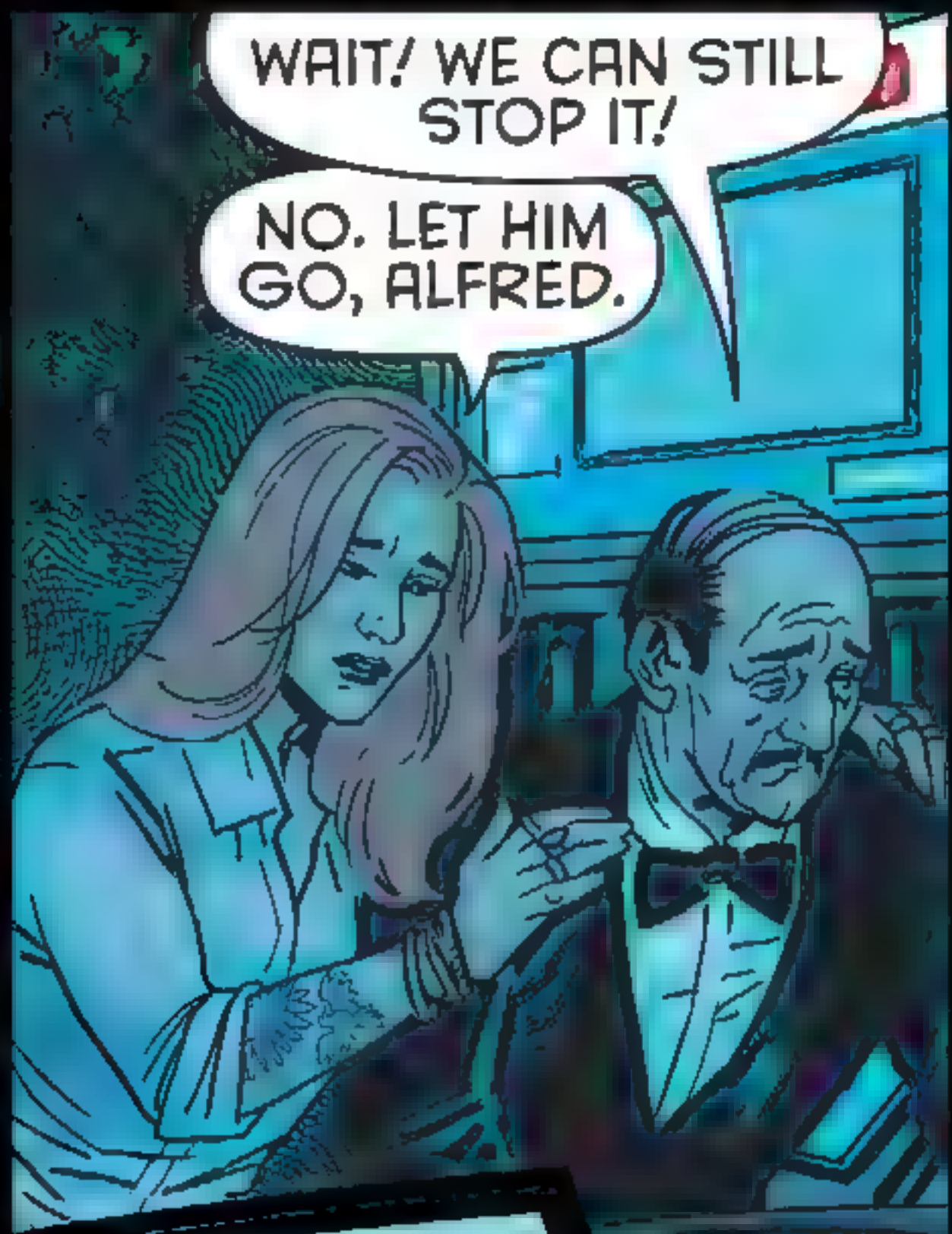
I LOVE YOU, JULES. I ALWAYS WILL.

AAAAHHHHH!



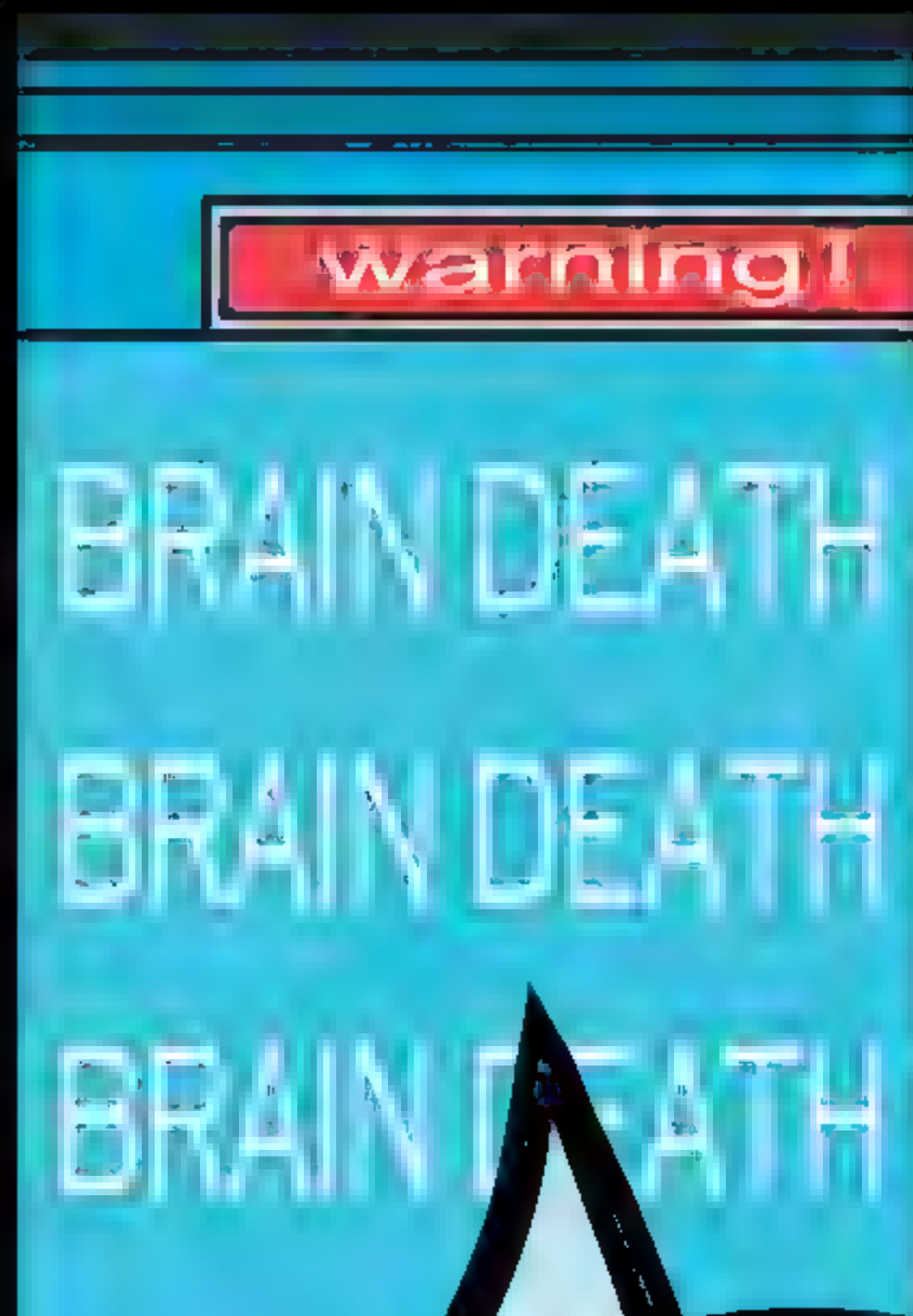


WARNING:
BRAIN DEATH
IMMINENT.



WAIT! WE CAN STILL
STOP IT!

NO. LET HIM
GO, ALFRED.



warning!

BRAIN DEATH

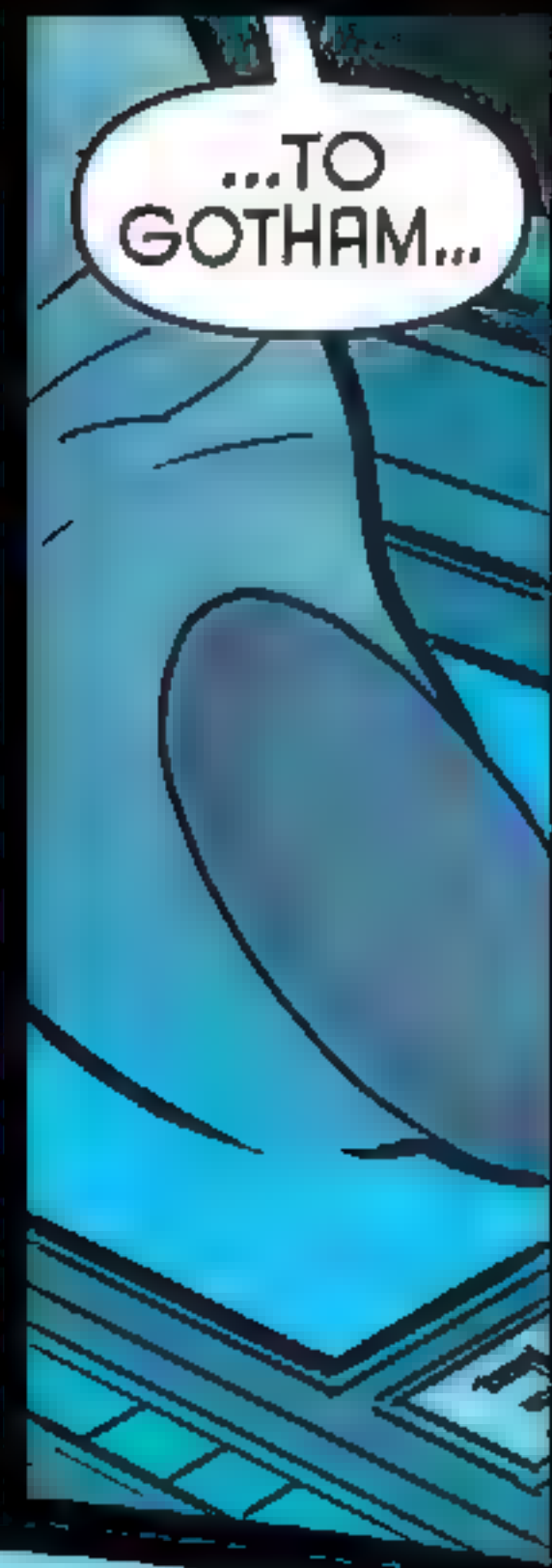
BRAIN DEATH

BRAIN DEATH

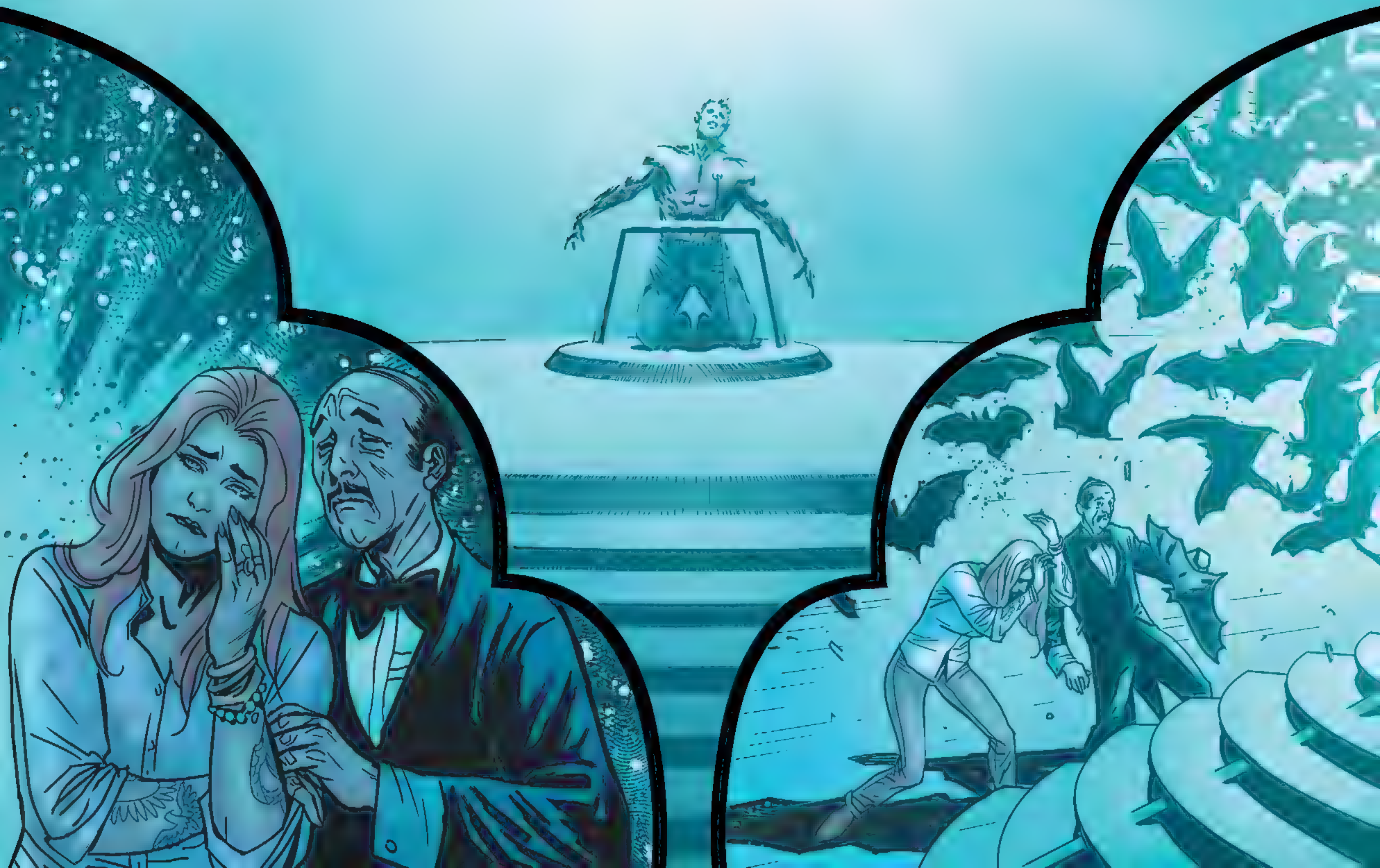


HE'S...
HE'S
GONE.

ALL RIGHT...
COME ON, BRUCE.
COME BACK TO
US...COME
BACK...



...TO
GOTHAM...





PROCESS
COMPLETE.



MASTER BRUCE?
IS THAT...YOU?

IF SO,
LISTEN TO ME.
YOU'VE BEEN AWAY A
LONG TIME, BUT THE
CITY, IT'S UNDER
THREAT OF--

STOP.



SAVE IT
FOR THE
CAR.

LET'S
GO TO
WORK.





All right.
It's time.



It's been a
good rest,
but the city
is calling
you.



They need their
Batman back.



You left them when
they needed you,
though. So, if you
do this...if you **come
back**...you better
give it everything
you've got.

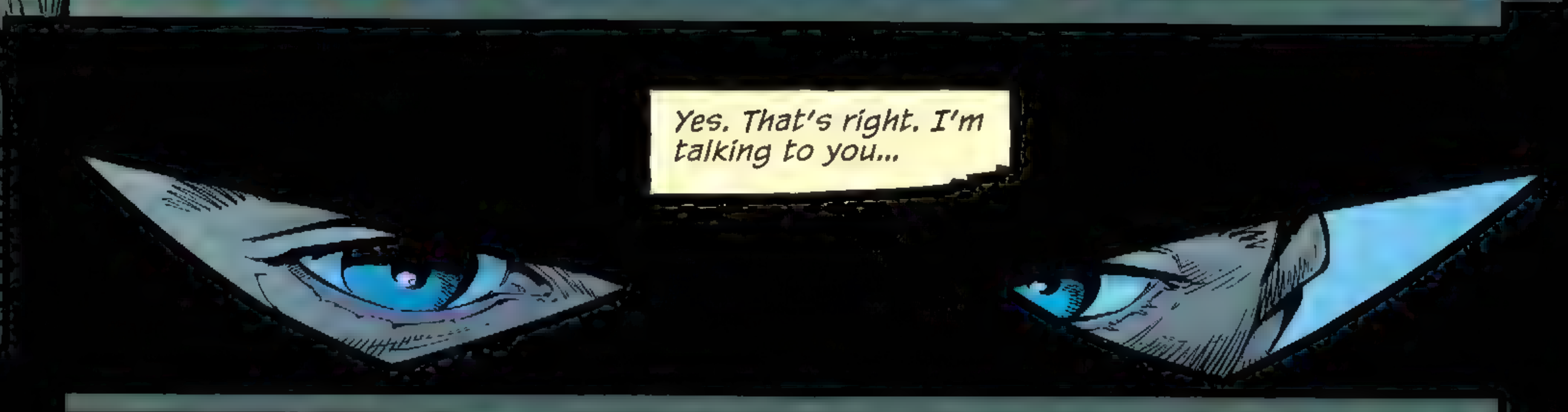


You better give them what
they've been waiting for,
and then some.

Give them
something
they've never
seen before.



Give them the
Batman they
deserve.



Yes. That's right. I'm
talking to you...

...Jim
Gordon.

Yes, you,
chump!
Get up,
right now!
You can
do this!

Do it. Do
it now.

→Gasp←

JULIA?
STOP. I NEED
TO--

WHAT
YOU NEED,
JIM, IS TO GET
TO A BLOODY
HOSPITAL,
FAST.

LIKE
HELL I
D--

LISTEN TO ME.
BLOOM REACHED
DOWN YOUR THROAT
AND PUNCTURED YOUR
SPLEEN. YOU'RE
BLEEDING INTERNALLY.
WITHOUT MEDICAL
ATTENTION,
YOU'LL **DIE**.

LET ME UP,
NO---→COUGH
COUGH←

JIM! PLEASE.
YOU'VE DONE
ENOUGH. I CAN'T
SEE ANOTHER
BATMAN GO
DOWN ON MY
WATCH.

JIM!

LET ME SEE,
DAMMIT...

GOTHAM CITY. RIGHT NOW.

"...I NEED TO SEE
WHAT HE'S DONE
TO THE CITY!"

AH, THE
CAVALRY!
JUST IN
TIME!

POLICE! THERE ARE TERRIFIED PEOPLE IN
THOSE BUILDINGS! WE ARE THE TARGETS
FROM NOW ON, NOT THEM, YOU HEAR
ME?! NO ONE BUT US
SOLDIERS GO DOWN!

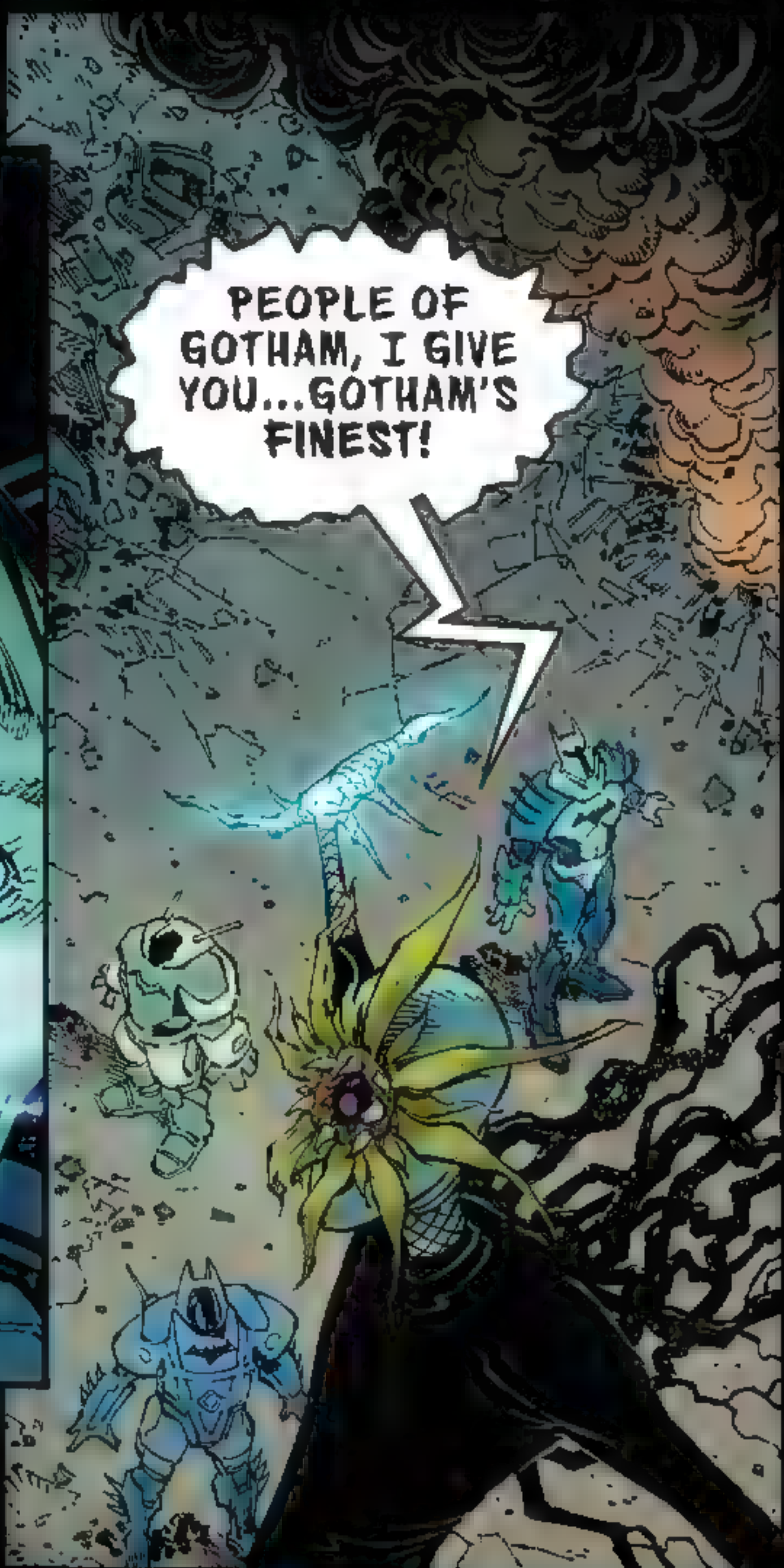
NOW LET'S SHOW
THIS SCUMBAG WHAT
WE THINK OF SKINNY
JEANS IN GOTHAM!

BUT
COMMISSIONER
SAWYER, YOU DIDN'T
EVEN GIVE ME A
CHANCE TO PUT MY
HANDS UP!

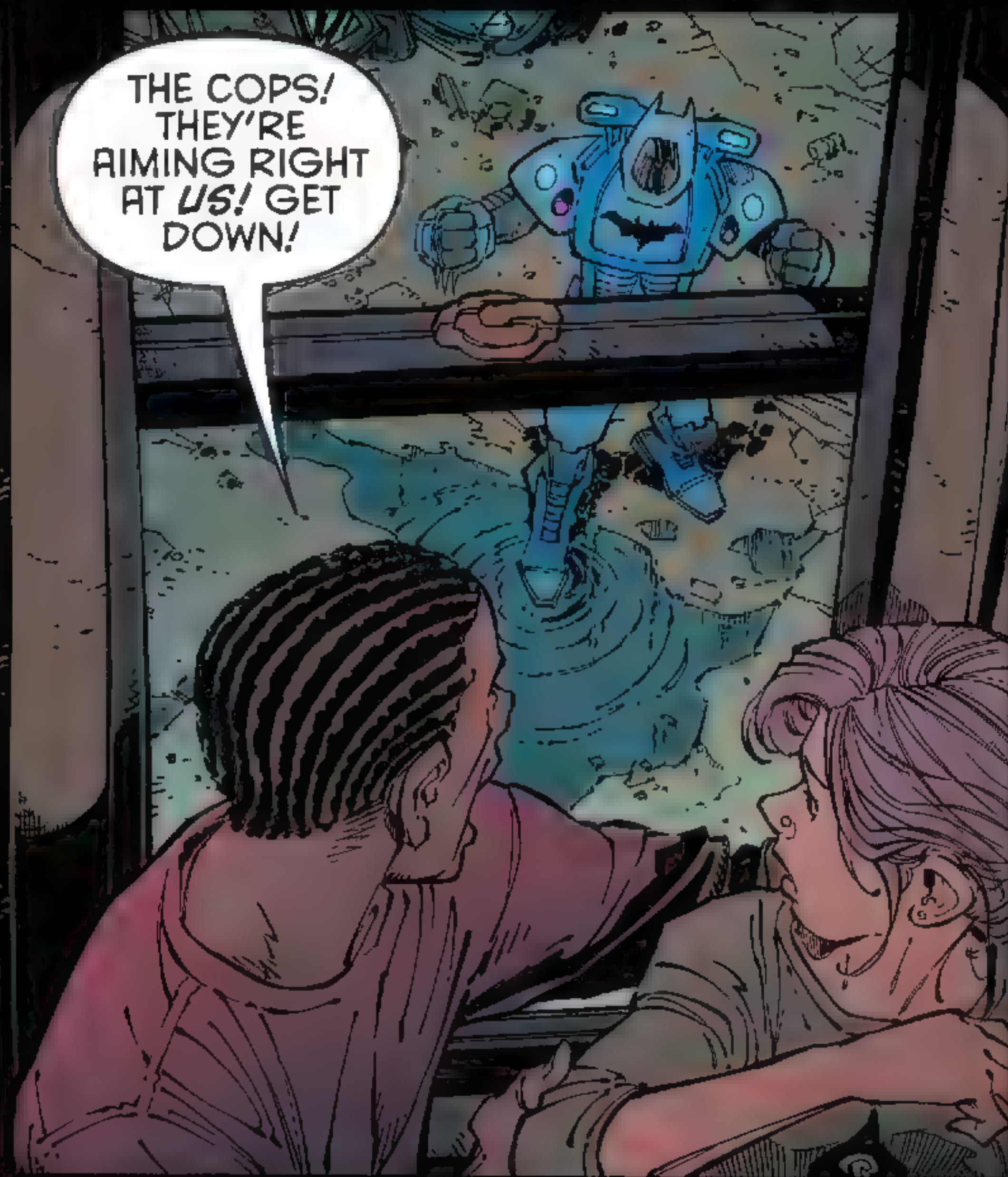
ZZZZZZZ



THE
CONTROLS...
HE'S...HE'S
INSIDE THE
SUITS!



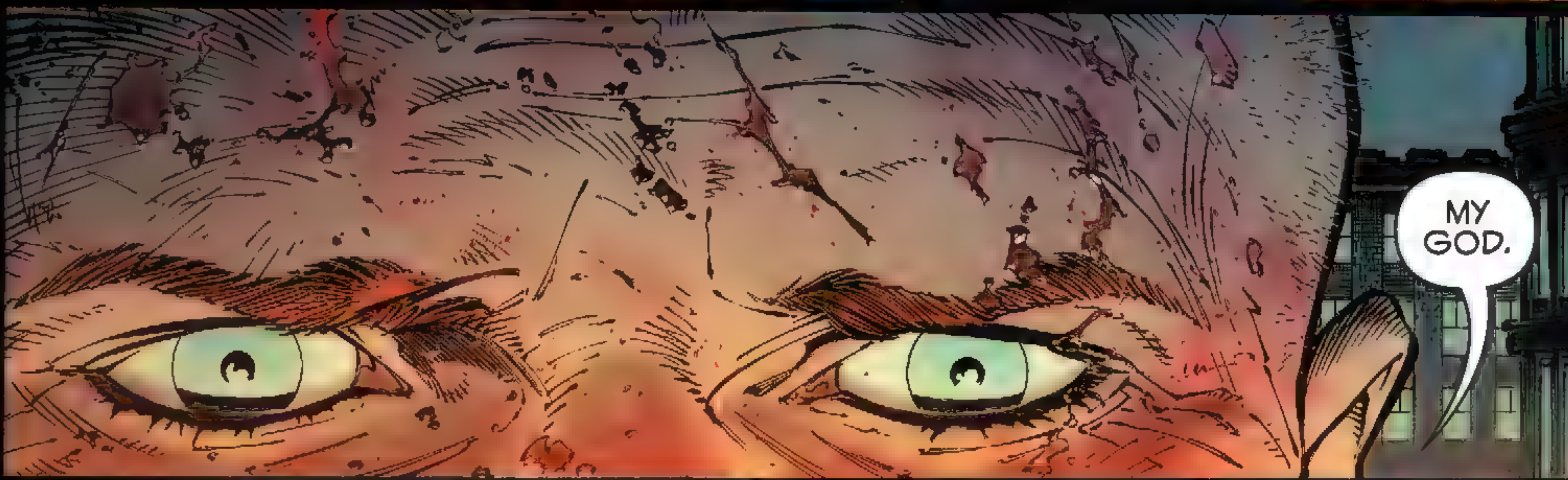
PEOPLE OF
GOTHAM, I GIVE
YOU...GOTHAM'S
FINEST!



THE COPS!
THEY'RE
AIMING RIGHT
AT US! GET
DOWN!



BLOOM!
STOP THIS!
STOP!



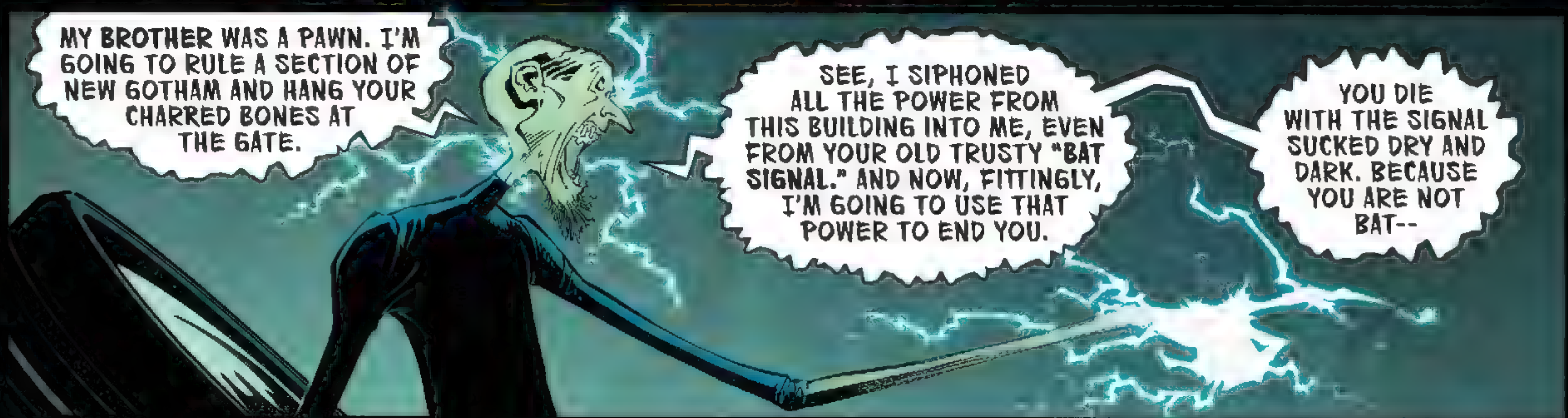
MY
GOD.

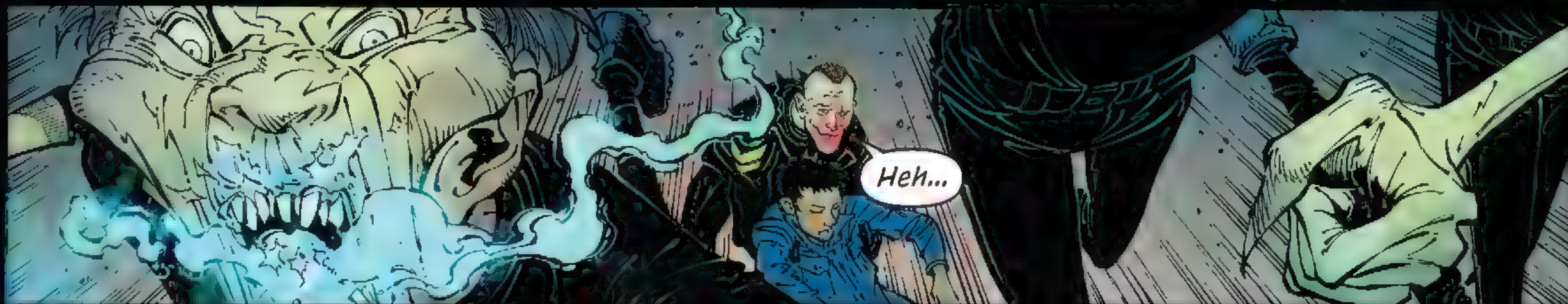


IT'S...IT'S ALL MY FAULT, JULIA.
I THOUGHT I COULD SHOW
THEM. I COULD *BRIDGE*
THINGS AND...

JIM. YOU NEED
TO GET HELP. YOU
HAVE AN HOUR,
MAYBE LESS.

I'D SAY
LESS.





SUPERHEAVY

PART TEN



SCOTT SNYDER WRITER GREG CAPULLO PENCILS

DANNY MIKI INKS FCO PLASCENCIA COLORS

YANICK PROUETTE EPILOGUE ART NATHAN FAIRBRAIR EPILOGUE COLORS

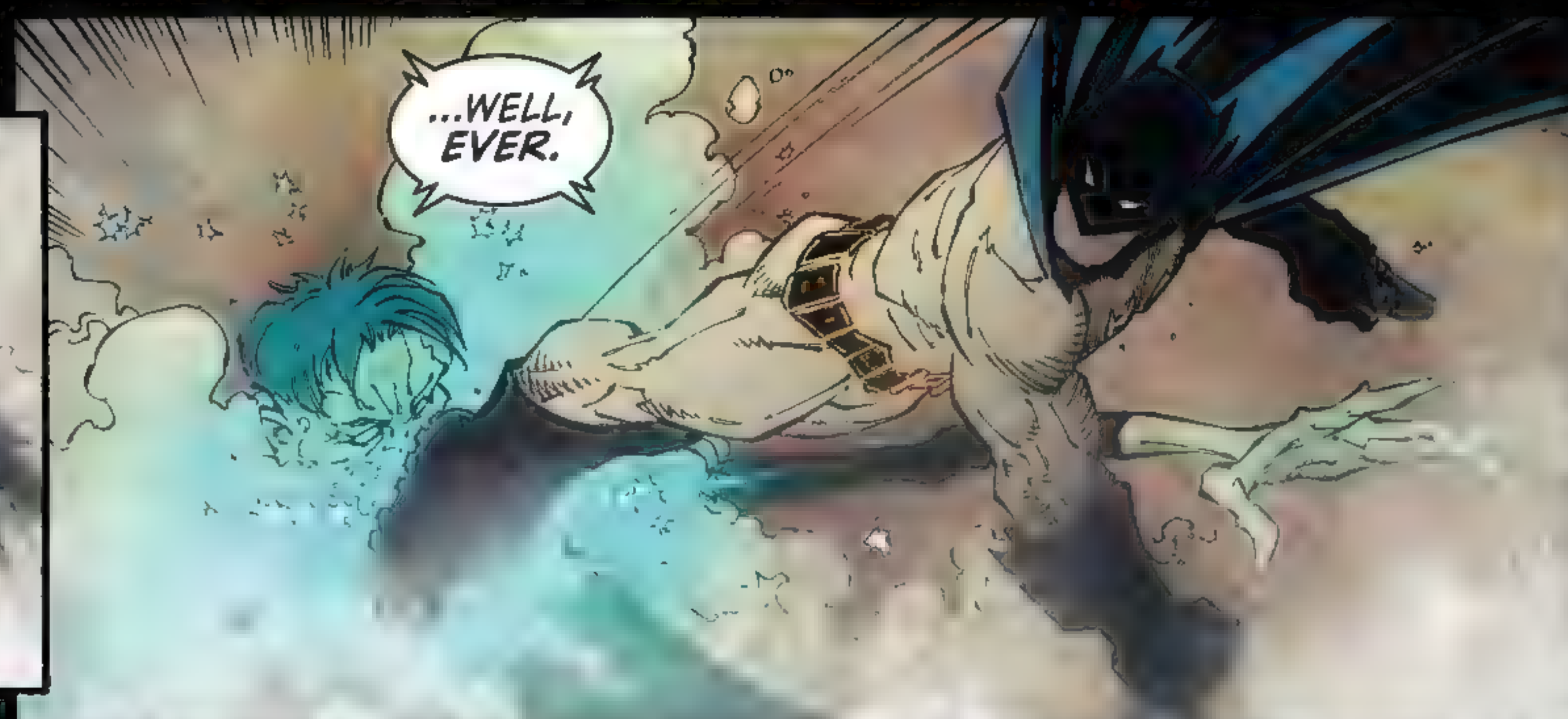
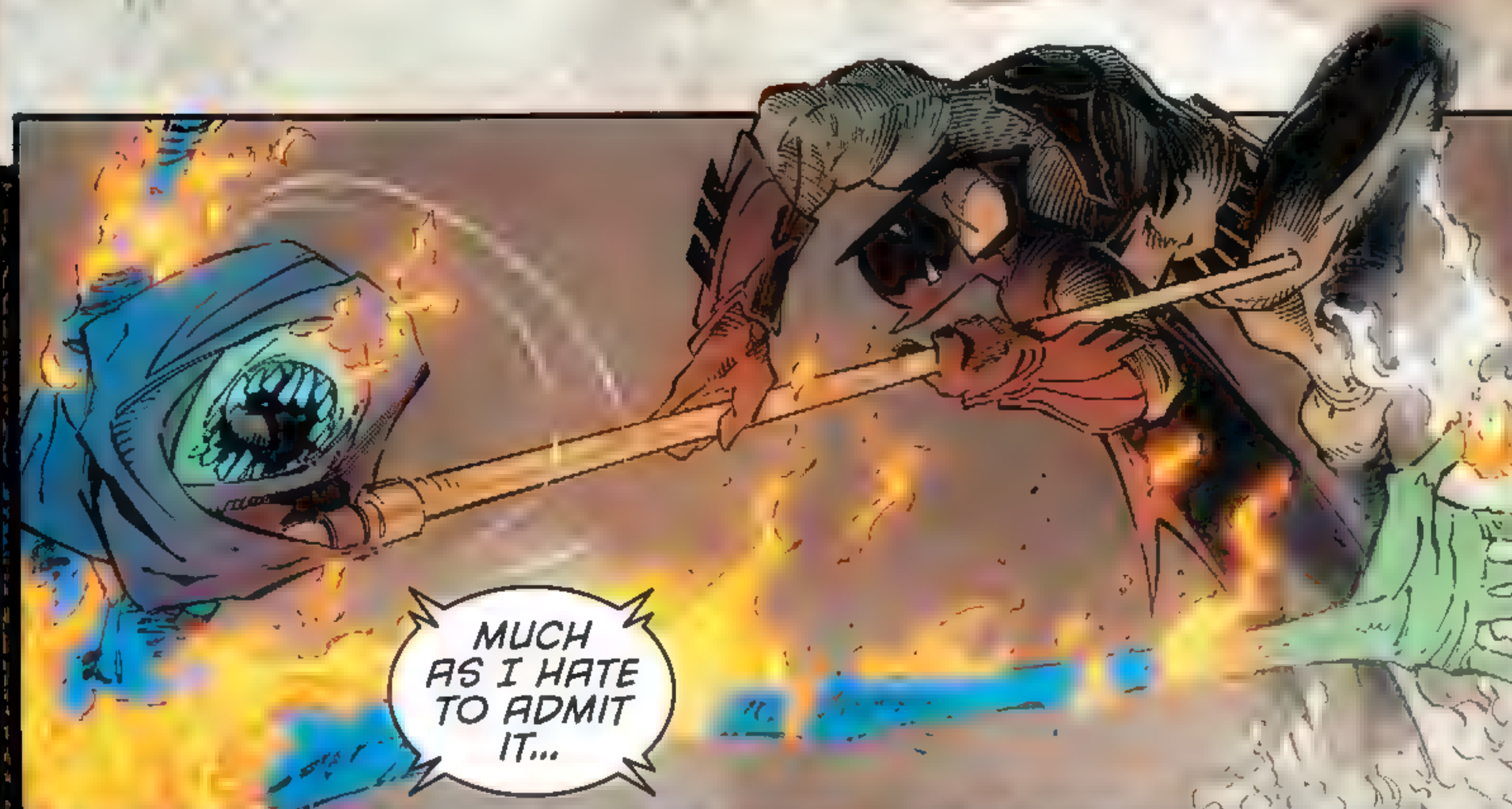
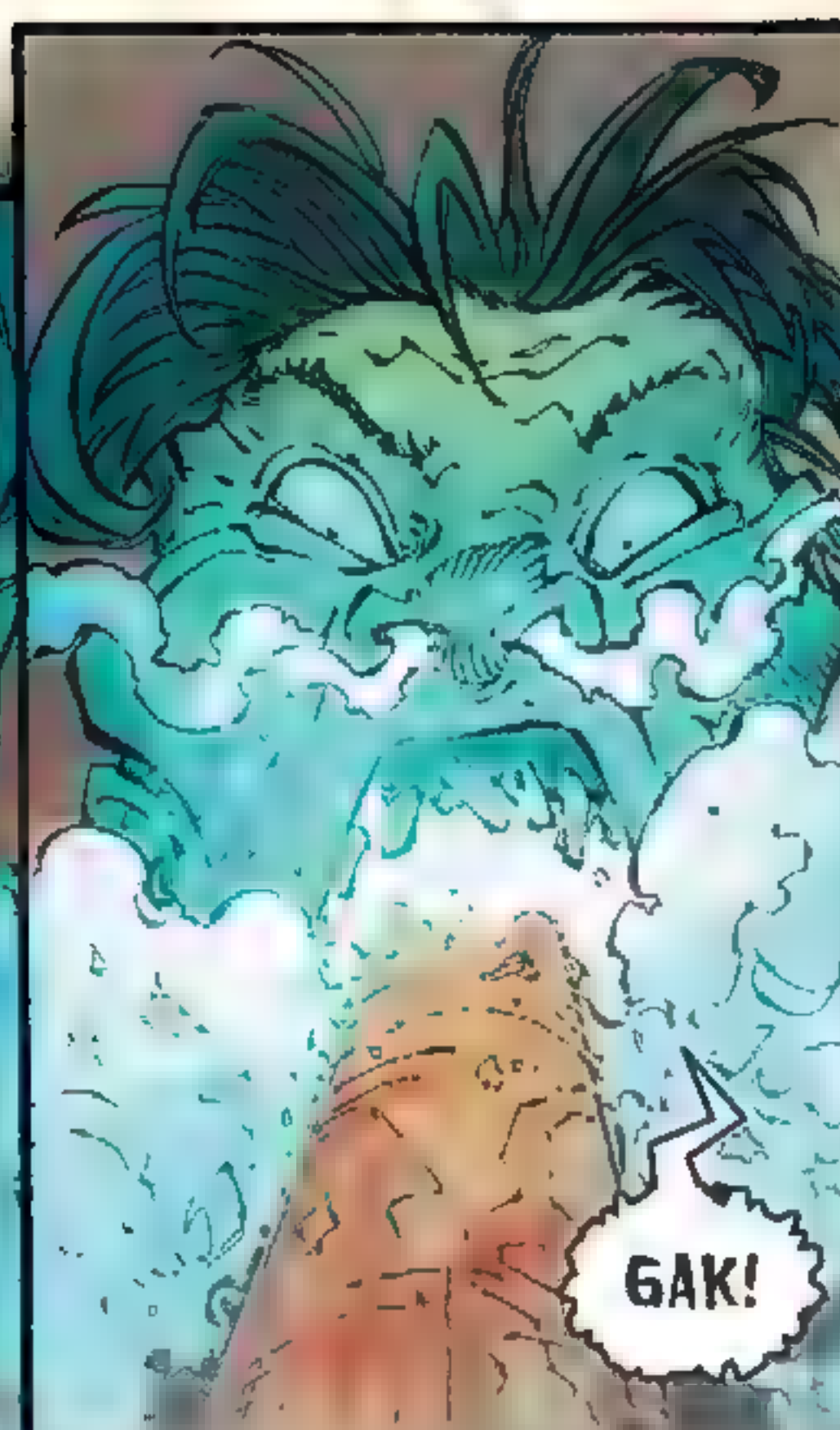
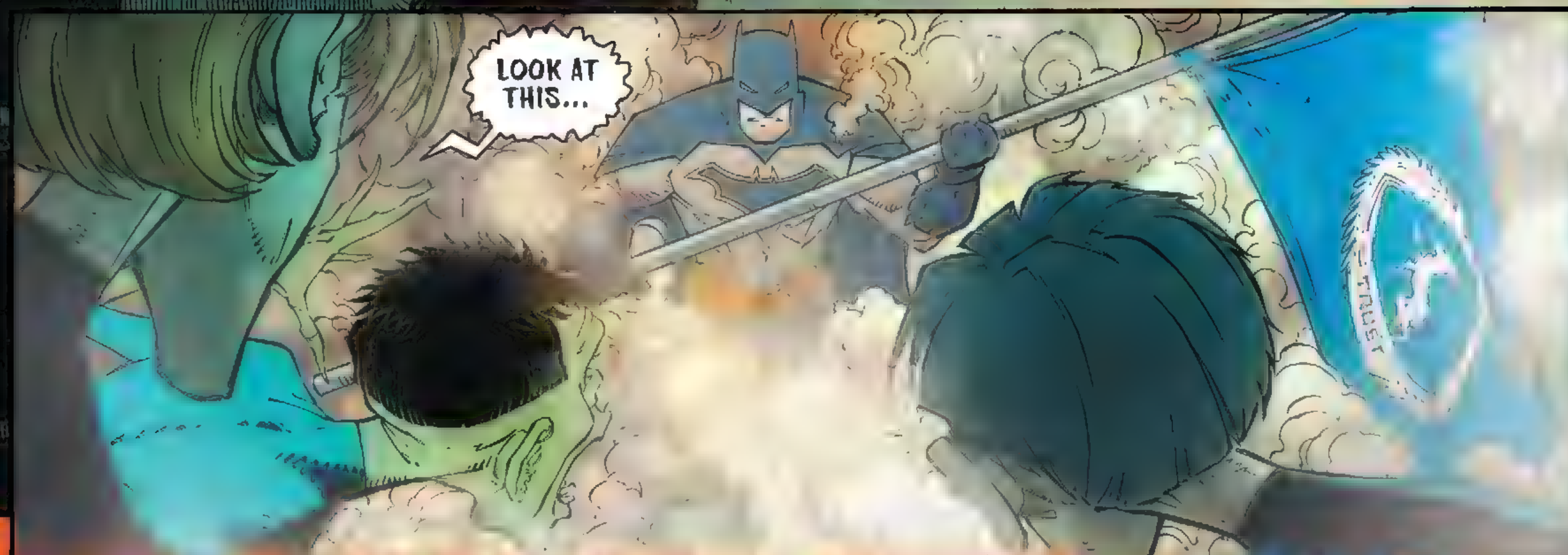
STEVE WAROS LETTERS CAPULLO MIKI PLASCENCIA COVER

BATMAN & SUPERMAN VARIANT COVERS BY

CHRIS DAUGHTRY, JIM LEE & ALEX SINCLAIR; DAVE JOHNSON & DAVE MCCAIG

REBECCA TAYLOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR MARK DOYLE EDITOR

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER





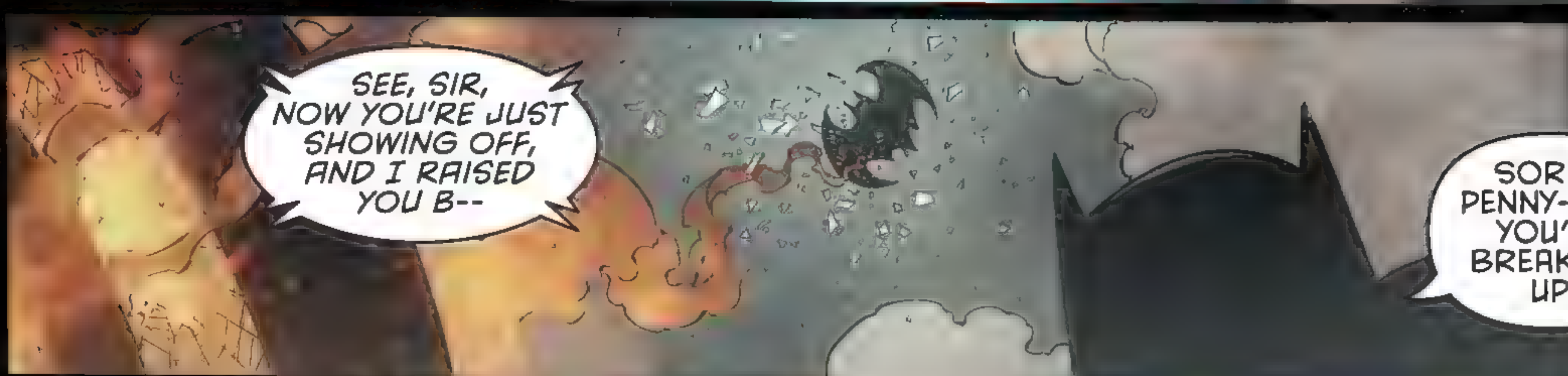
UNTIL
YOU DESTROY
YOURSELF ALL
OVER AGAIN, OF
COURSE.



OF
COURSE.

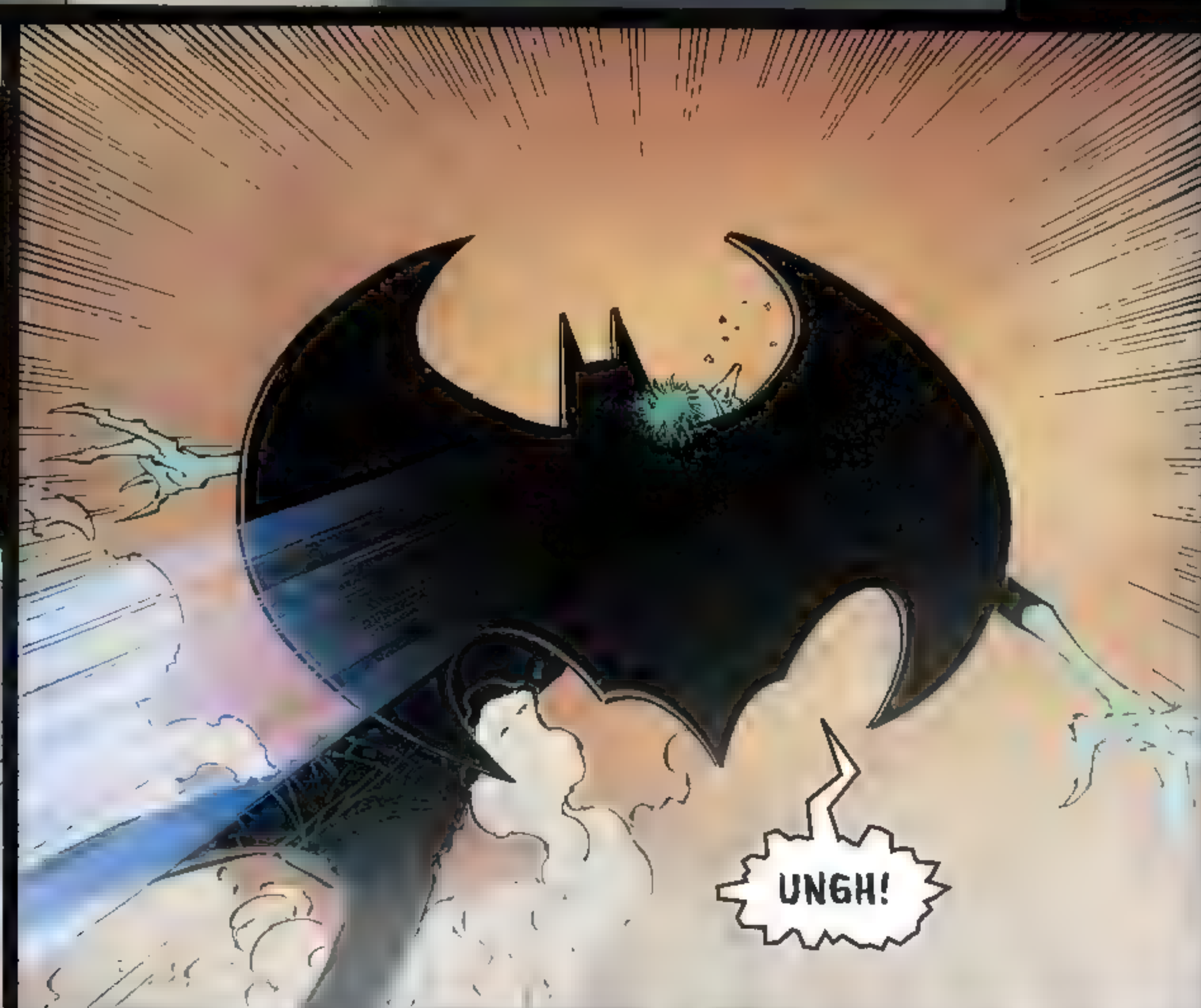


DIE!



SEE, SIR,
NOW YOU'RE JUST
SHOWING OFF,
AND I RAISED
YOU B--

SORRY,
PENNY-ONE.
YOU'RE
BREAKING
UP.



UNGH!



WELL, AT
LEAST LET ME
SAY, SIR...

...WELCOME
HOME.



HOW IS SHE?

SHE'LL BE OKAY.

AND YOU?

⇒Cough Cough⇒
I'M FINE. YOU KNOW, I WAS JUST ABOUT TO DO THAT SAME MOVE YOU DID...THE FLIP THING WITH THE FLAG.

TRULY, THOUGH, I'M A LOT BETTER, NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE.

LISTEN, BATMAN, I'M SOR--

I JUST DIDN'T WANT TO STEAL YOUR THUNDER.

KRAKOOON



WHAT THE HELL...

IT LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF...**ENERGY PULSE**.

BUT THE DARKNESS OF IT...

A **STRANGE STAR**. THE POWER IT'D TAKE TO CREATE A VIABLE STRANGE MATTER REACTION...

BEEP BEEP

YOU. DON'T DISAPPEAR.

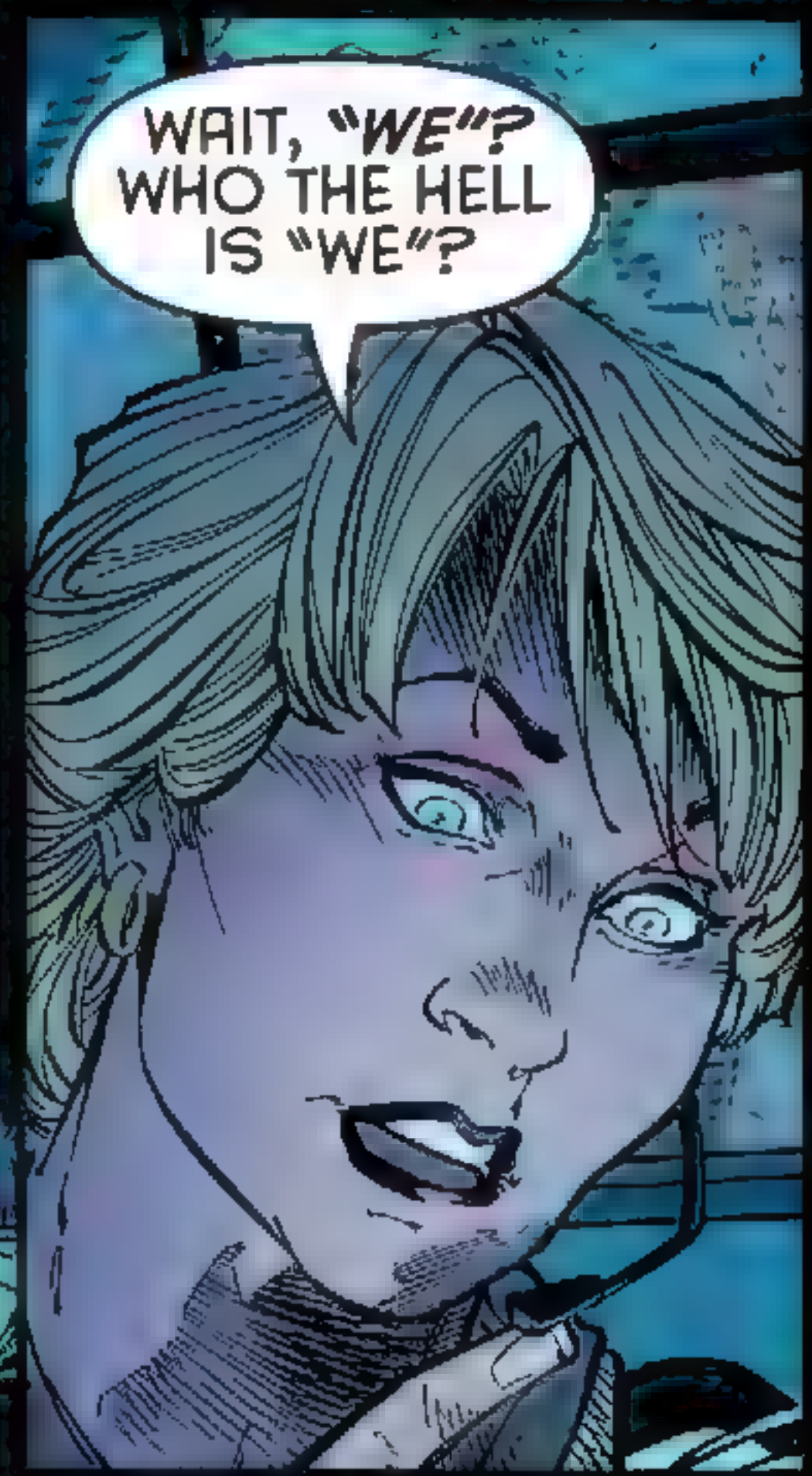
GERI?

JIM, IT'S THE **COLLIDER**. IT'S FEEDING ON THE ENERGY FROM THE SEEDS PEOPLE ARE TAKING! BLOOM IS FUNNELING IT TO THE BEAMS SOMEHOW!

HE'S CREATING A STRANGE ENERGY SURGE THAT COULD DESTROY THE ENTIRE AREA, MAYBE THE CITY, IF IT KEEPS GROWING!

WE'RE ON IT!

WAIT, "WE"? WHO THE HELL IS "WE"?



BLOOM MUST HAVE SOME KIND OF TRANSMITTER IN HIS BODY, SOME KIND OF **SUPER-SEED** THAT DRAWS IN POWER FROM ACTIVE **SEEDS** ALL OVER THE CITY AND THEN FUNNELS THAT POWER TO THE COLLIDER, MAKING IT UNSTABLE.

THE MORE PEOPLE TAKE SEEDS, THE MORE POWER COURSES THROUGH **BLOOM** TO THE COLLIDER.

THE CENTER CAN'T HOLD. HE'S PROVING A POINT. WE HAVE TO GET THAT **SEED** OUT OF HIM, AND FAST. LET'S DO THI--

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU...

DAMMIT! DON'T DO THIS! I NEED TO...

THE CUFFS HAVE A GPS. WHEN YOU GET TO THE HOSPITAL, IT'LL RELEASE YOU. GO, JIM.

I NEED TO...

GODSPEED, OLD FRIEND.

"GODSPEED."



DUKE?!
WHAT THE...

→HUFF HUFF←
I'M SORRY. I
CLIMBED THE
MOORING CABLE
AS YOU WERE
TAKING OFF.

WHY? I TOLD YOU, YOU NEED
TO TAKE CARE OF--

I SAW
MY FOLKS,
DARYL.

I WENT TO
SEE THEM THIS
MORNING.

...AND?

"AND THE
DOCTORS GOT TO
THEM TOO LATE.
THEY'RE...THEY'RE
LIKE THAT
FOREVER.

"I'M TELLING YOU,
STANDING THERE, IN
FRONT OF THEIR
CELL? IT FELT LIKE
YOU WERE RIGHT,
DARYL. LIKE
EVERYTHING I'D
DONE OVER THE PAST
YEAR--TRYING TO
HELP...THE **ROBINS**...
IT FELT LIKE THIS IS
WHERE IT ALL LED.

"LIKE **GOTHAM** WAS
THROWING IT BACK
IN MY FACE. HERE
WERE THE TWO
PEOPLE I WAS
TRYING TO HONOR,
AND ALL THEY WERE
SAYING TO ME--ALL
THEY'D **EVER** SAY
WAS VENOM."

"THE TOXIN. THAT'S
WHAT IT DOES,
DUKE. THEY'RE NOT
WHO THEY WERE.
THEY'LL NEVER BE.
YOU...YOU HAVE TO
LET THEM GO.

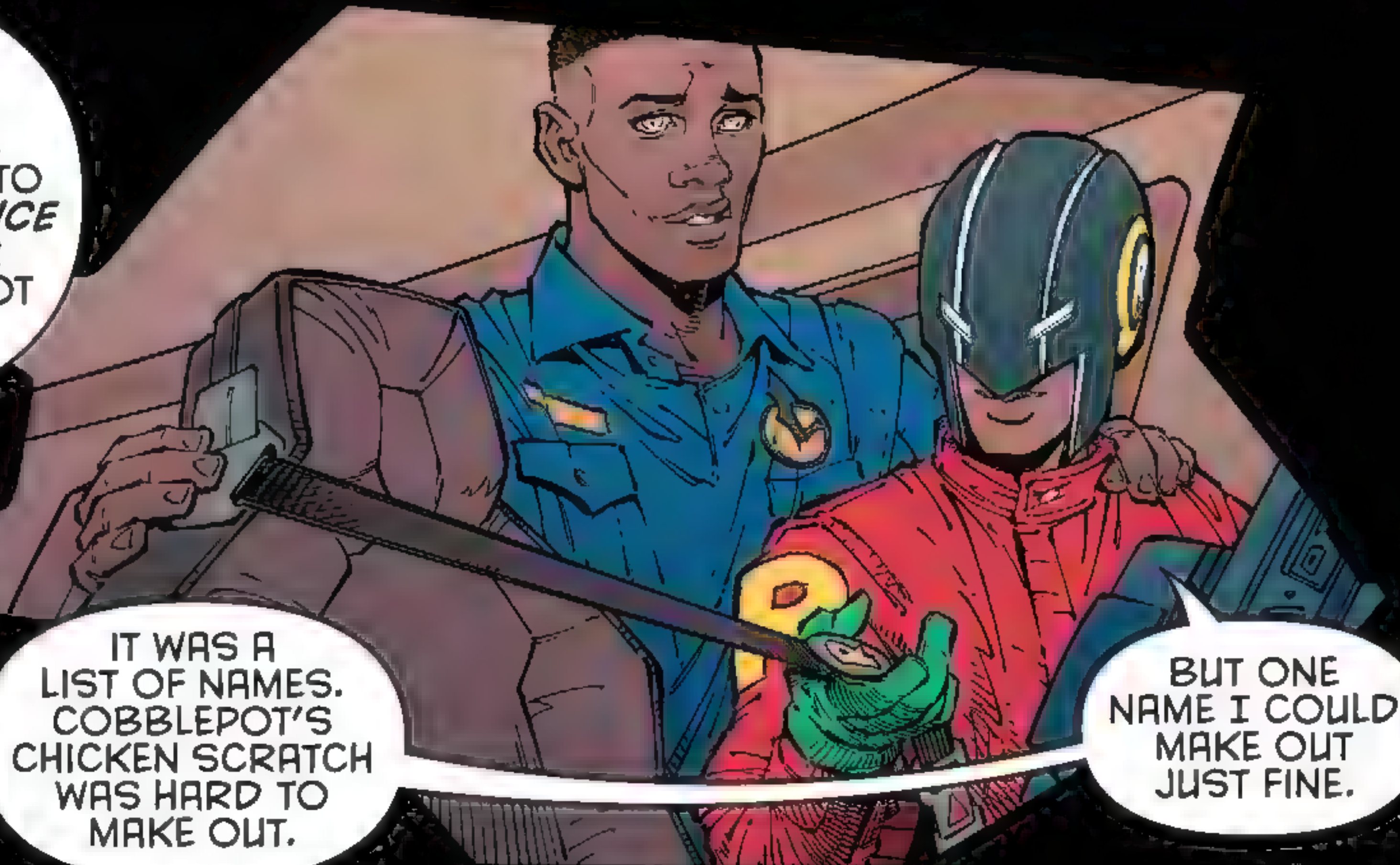
"IT'S WHAT
I'VE BEEN TELLING
YOU. PLEASE, YOU
CAN STILL GET AWAY
FROM ALL THIS."

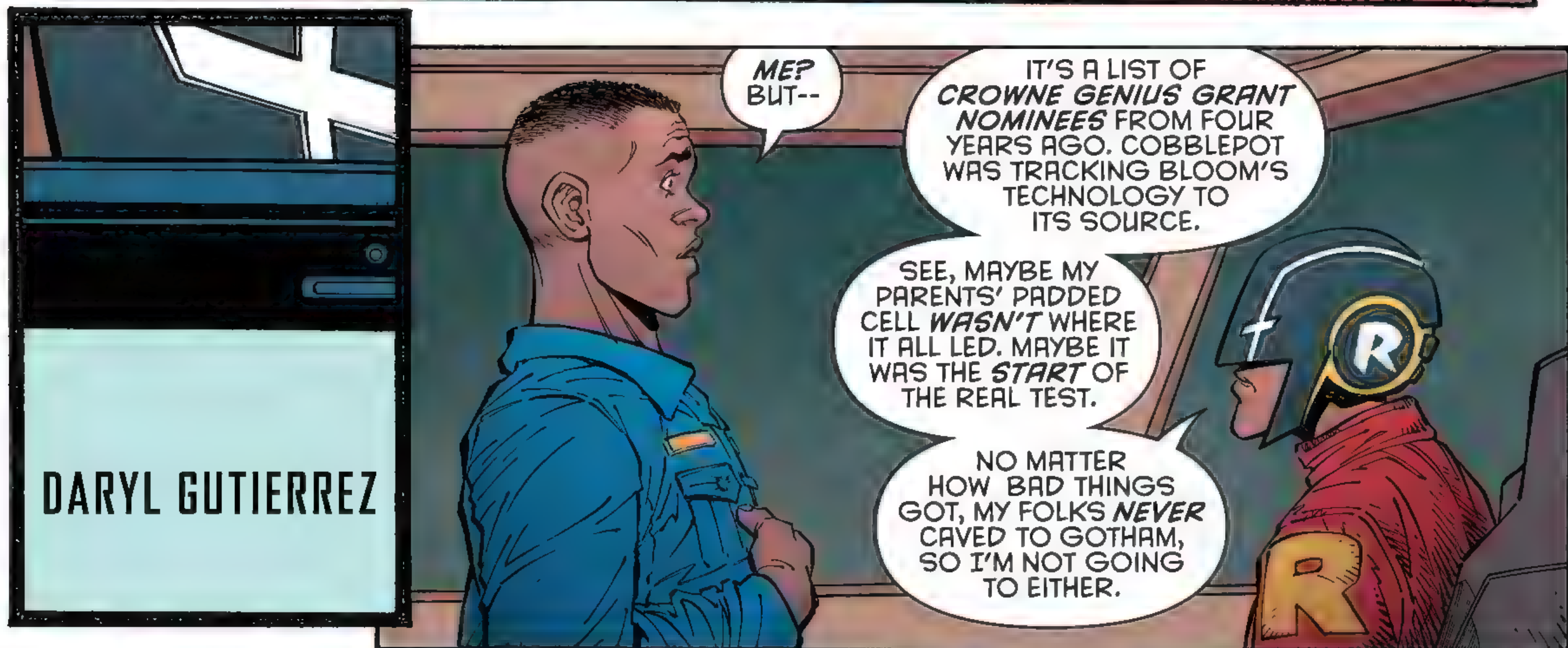
I WAS
GOING TO. I WAS
ABOUT TO TOSS ALL
OF IT--THE HELMET, THE
JACKET--I WAS GOING TO
THROW AWAY THE **EVIDENCE**
I'D FOUND ON MISTER
BLOOM, TOO. WHAT I GOT
FROM THE **ICEBERG**
LOUNGE.

I MEAN
EVEN **THAT**
MADE NO
SENSE.

IT WAS A
LIST OF NAMES.
COBBLEPOT'S
CHICKEN SCRATCH
WAS HARD TO
MAKE OUT.

BUT ONE
NAME I COULD
MAKE OUT
JUST FINE.









YOU?!...WOW.
I'M HONORED. THE
FIRST UNKILLABLE
WEED.

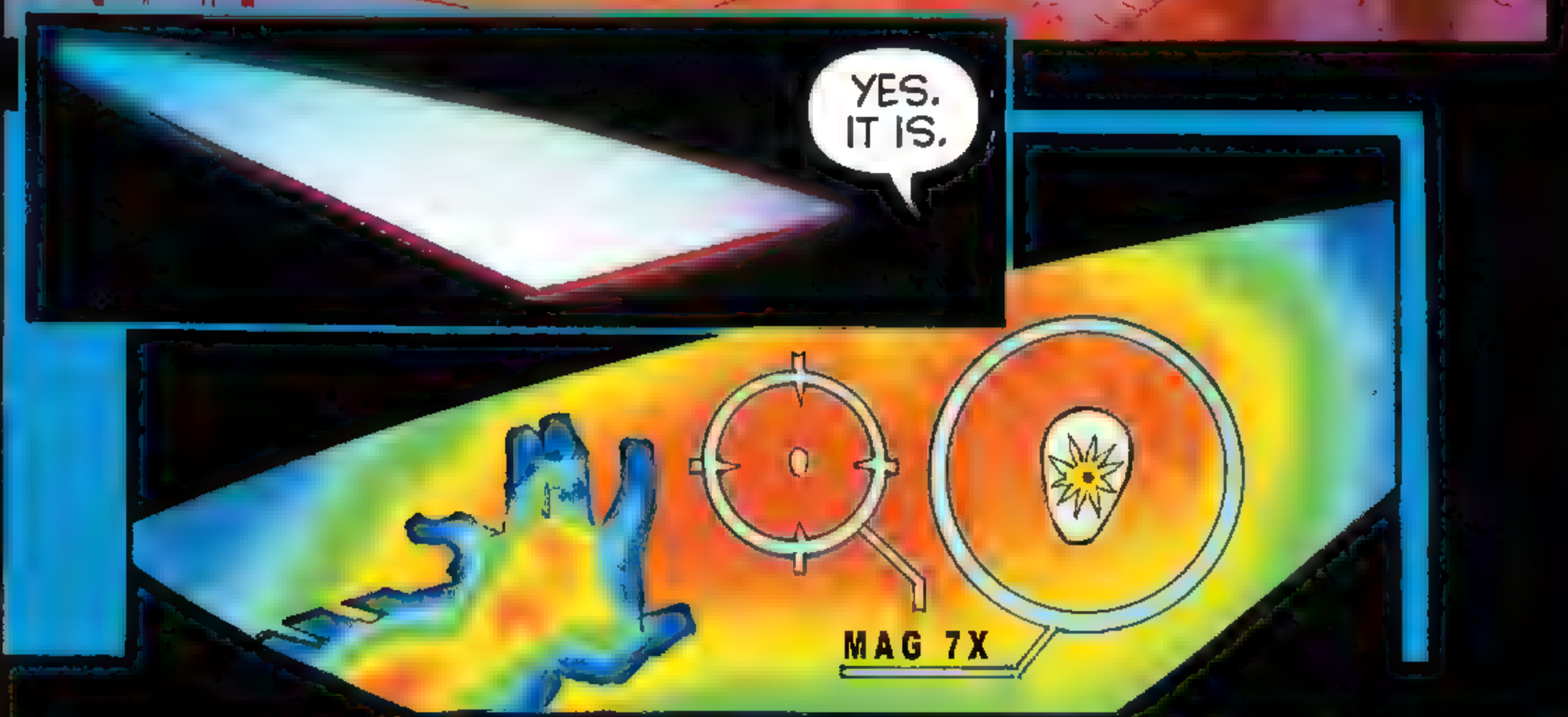
I LIKE THE
NEW SUIT, BY
THE WAY. NEW
CAPE. NEW
GLOVES.



I'M
PARTIAL
TO THE
BOOTS.



≡COUGH≡
SO THAT'S
HOW IT IS...?
RIGHT IN THE
BACK!



YES.
IT IS.

MAG 7X





WHAT'S THE
MATTER, BATMAN?
TOO MUCH, TOO
SOON? WELL, YOU
HAVE BEEN AWAY
A WHILE.

LET'S MAKE
THESE FEEL
MORE LIKE
HOME FOR
YOU.



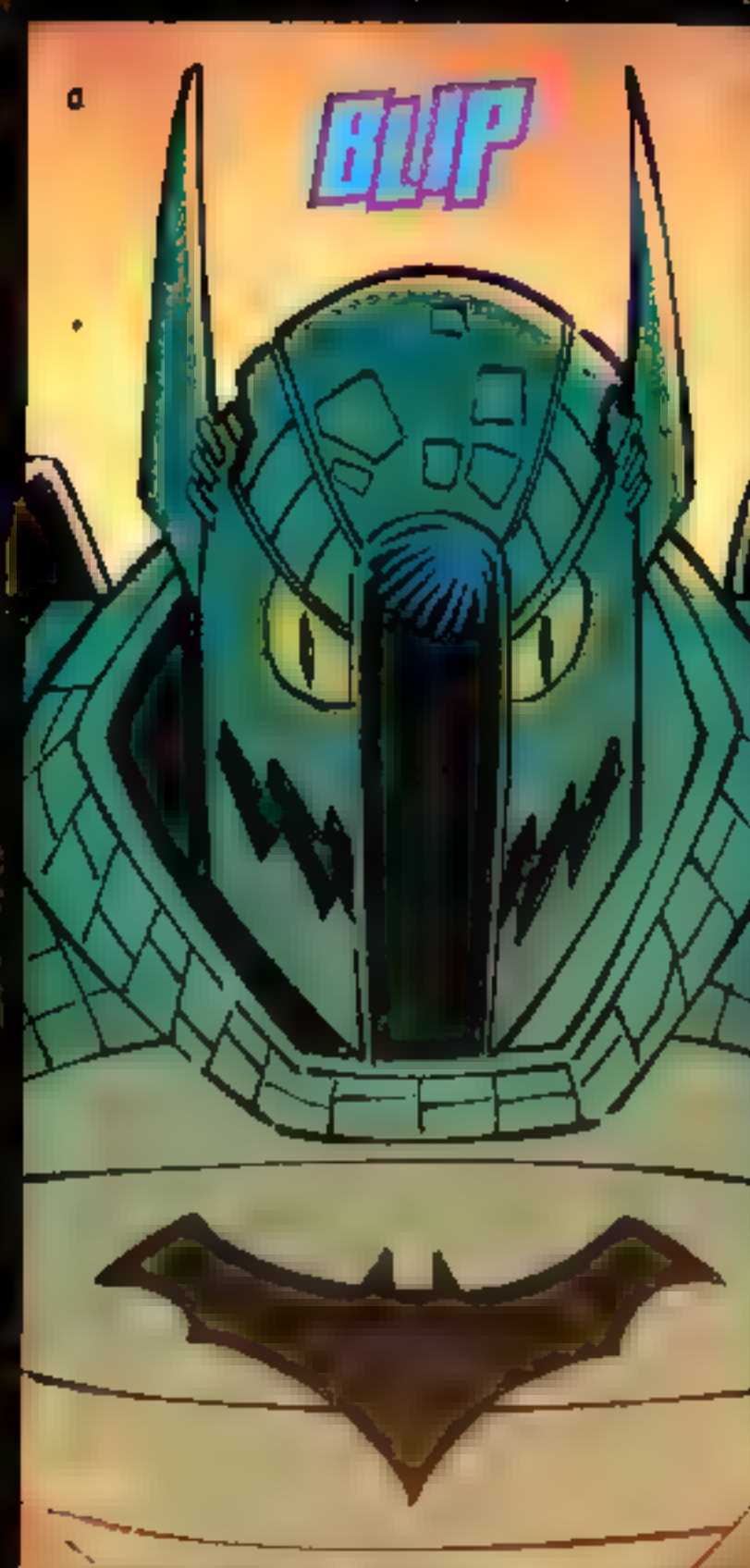
BLIP



BLIP



BLIP



BLIP

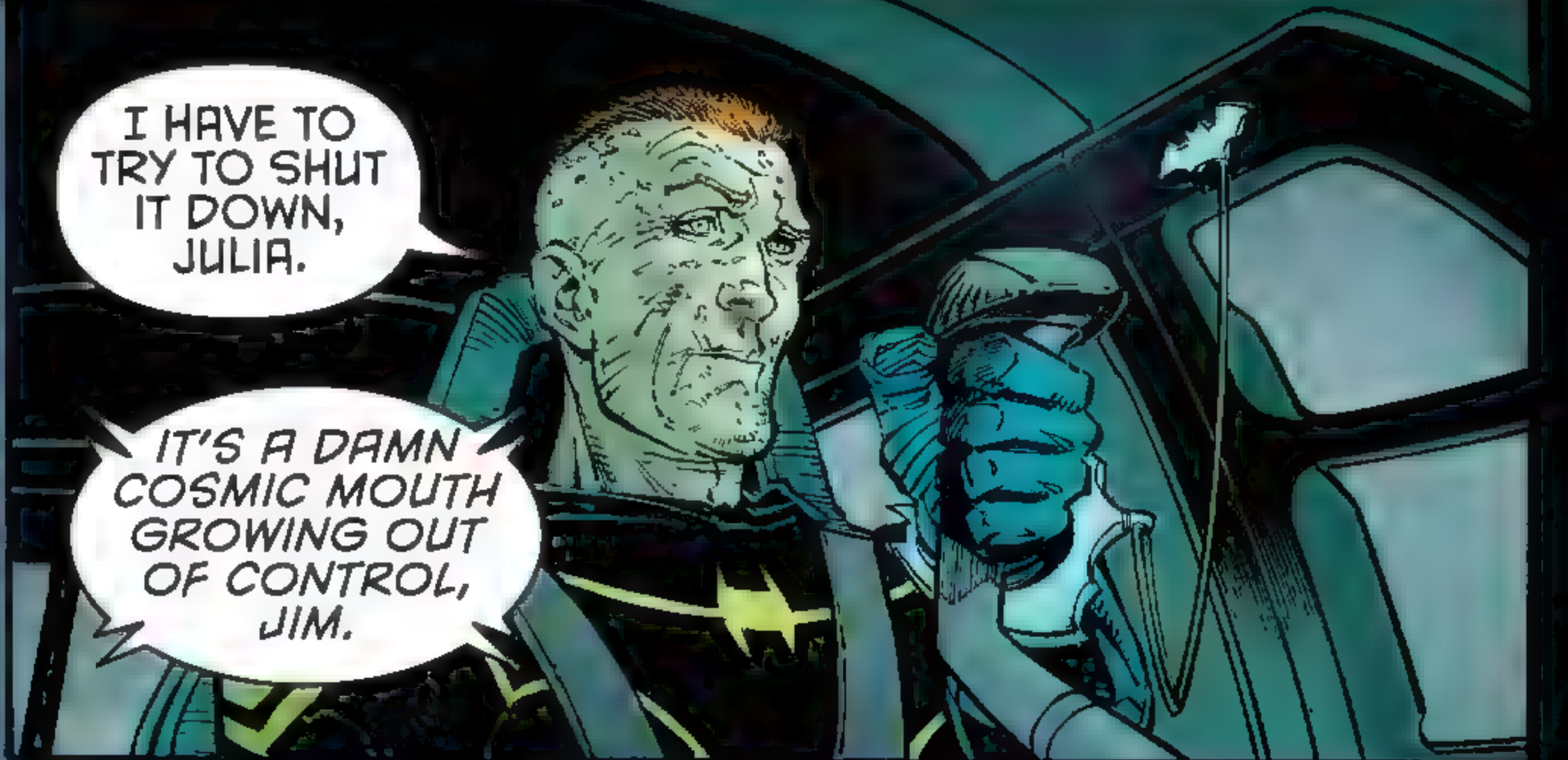


BLIP



HUH.
WHAT DO
WE HAVE
HERE?

JIM, WHAT
THE HELL ARE
YOU DOING?
THE HOSPITAL
IS--



I HAVE TO
TRY TO SHUT
IT DOWN,
JULIA.

IT'S A DAMN
COSMIC MOUTH
GROWING OUT
OF CONTROL,
JIM.

TO STOP THAT
THING, YOU'LL
HAVE TO DESTROY
THE *SUPER-SEED*
IN BLOOM, AND
THE SEEDS IN THE
CITIZENS, AND
HIT IT WITH A
DAMPENER OF
SUCH POWER...

NONE
EXISTS,
JIM.
NONE.



YOU'RE
SAYING IT'S
HOPELESS.

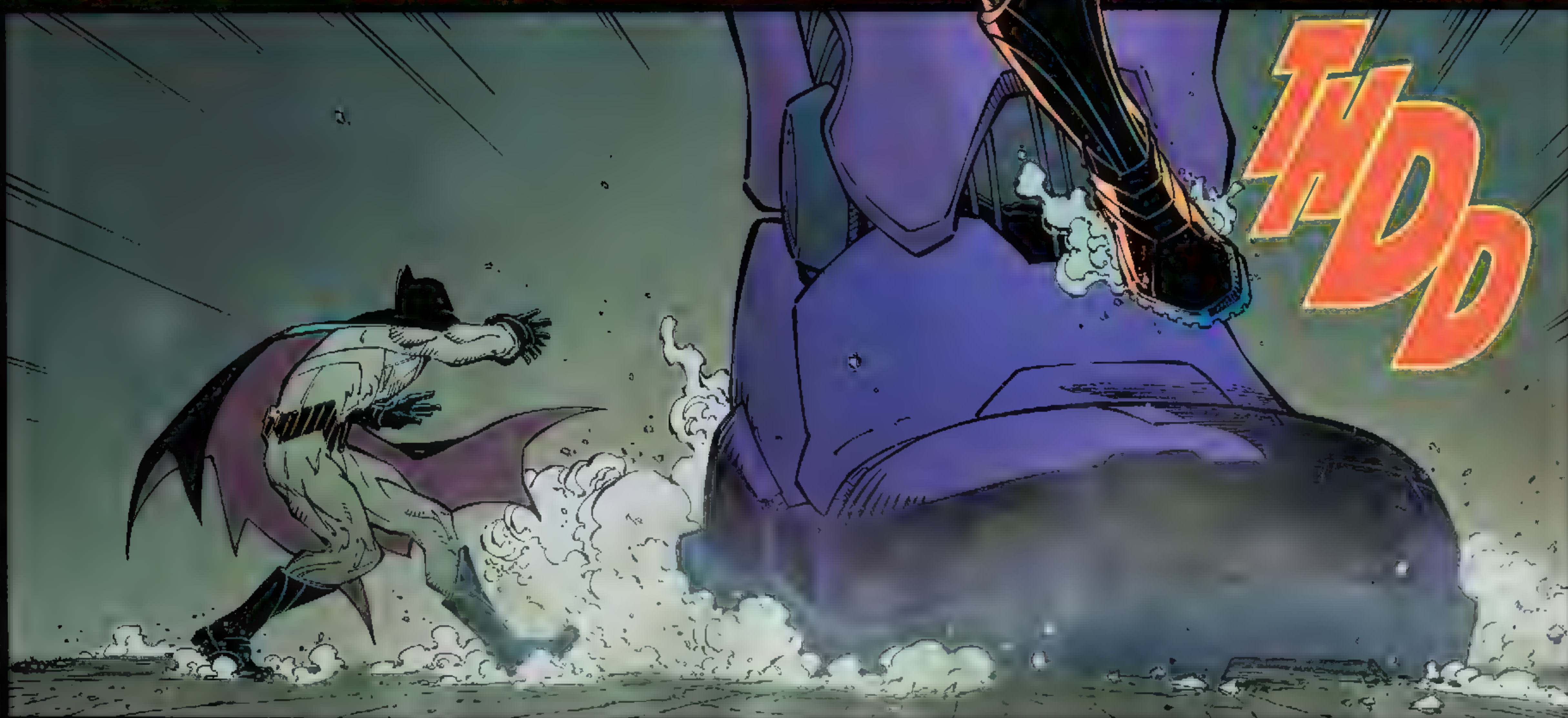
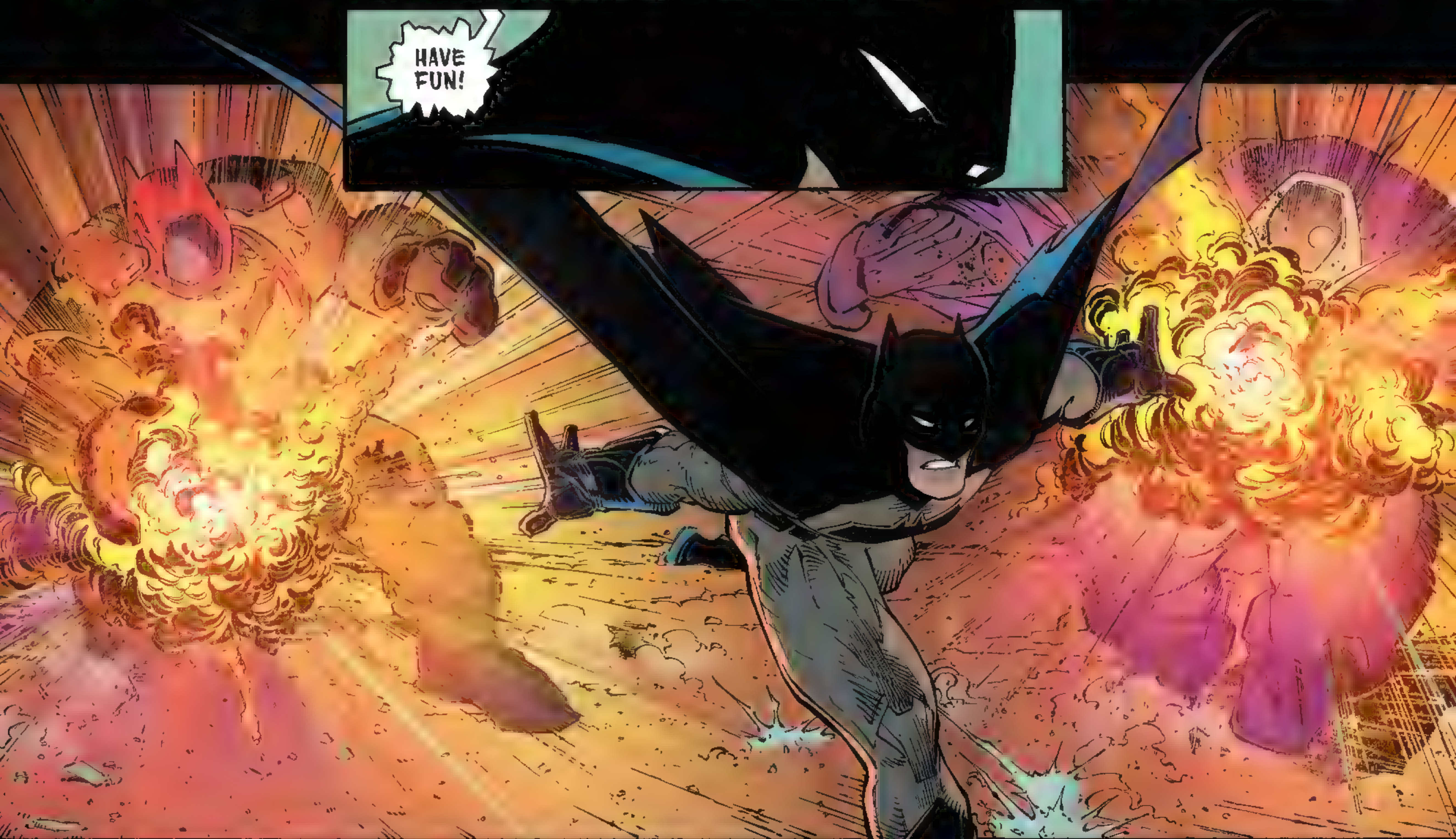
->Sigh<-

I'M
SAYING...GOOD
LUCK.




Heh. I'LL
TAKE IT.








"YOU'RE WAAAY OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE..."



...THE **SEED** IN ME, IT ALLOWS ME TO CONTROL BIO-ORGANIC MATTER. I CAN CONTROL YOUR BODY.

SO JUST... JUST LISTEN TO ME, DUKE. I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU.


I'M TRYING TO DO THE SAME THING YOU ARE! I AM! I TOOK THIS BLIMP TO **STOP** HIM...TO STOP BLOOM!



THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK? YOU THINK I'M PARTNERS WITH HIM?! I **HATE** HIM! I HATE HIM MORE THAN ANYONE IN THIS CITY!

HE TOOK EVERYTHING FROM ME! HE TOOK IT ALL! I **WAS** BLOOM, DUKE. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE **ME**!

Unh... YOU'RE **WORKING** FOR HIM. HOW COULD YOU--



"YOU REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS LIKE, AFTER **RIDDLER'S** ATTACK. THE CITY WAS WRECKED. BATMAN HAD SAVED US, BUT NOW...PEOPLE WERE **SCARED**.

"SO I HAD THIS VISION. I REALIZED IF THE PEOPLE OF GOTHAM HAD THE POWER TO PROTECT EACH OTHER, TO STOP THE PREDATORS AMONG THEM--GOOD PEOPLE ARMED WITH REAL POWER...

"I USED THE MONEY FROM MY CROWNE GRANT TO DEVELOP PROTOTYPES IN SECRET.

"I WAS GOING TO BE GOTHAM'S HERO, DUKE. MISTER BLOOM. NAMED FOR **BLOSSOM ROW**. WHERE PEOPLE CAME TOGETHER, ONCE UPON A TIME.

"I GAVE THE FIRST 'SEED' TO MY COUSIN, **PETER**. I THOUGHT HE'D SET AN EXAMPLE BUT...IT DIDN'T WORK OUT.

"SO I **BURNED** IT ALL AND SET BATMAN ON A DEAD TRAIL.



"BUT THEN IT ALL HAPPENED AGAIN. **JOKER'S ATTACK**. AND WITH BATMAN GONE...

"I DECIDED I'D TRY AGAIN.

"I ONLY USED UNIDENTIFIED VICTIMS. PEOPLE WHO WERE HEADED TO THE **POTTER'S FIELD**. NOBODIES."

"AND I WAS GOING TO DO IT DIFFERENTLY THIS TIME. MY SEEDS, THEY'D ONLY WORK IF THE HOST WASN'T ACTING IN ANGER, OR RAGE. LOW LEVELS OF CATECHOLAMINE... LIKE A **SAFETY** ON A GUN.

"I'D JUST BEGUN TESTING. IT WASN'T GOING WELL, AND I WAS GOING TO GIVE UP FOR GOOD, WHEN..."

KRAASH

WHAT THE...

HELLO, DOCTOR.

I GUESS I'M YOUR MONSTER.

"I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHICH SEED WORKED. DON'T KNOW IF HE'S A MAN, A WOMAN. HE TOOK MY MASK. HE TOOK MY WORK. HE TOOK IT ALL.

"BUT I'M GOING TO TAKE IT BACK, DUKE. I AM. YOU WATCH.

THE RESEARCH CAN STILL WORK. MY RESEARCH, EVERYTHING BLOOM STOLE, EVERYTHING HE **BASTARDIZED**.

THINK OF IT, A **CITY** WHERE GOOD PEOPLE ARE EMPOWERED. A CITY WHERE THEY CAN DO MORE THAN WE EVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE...

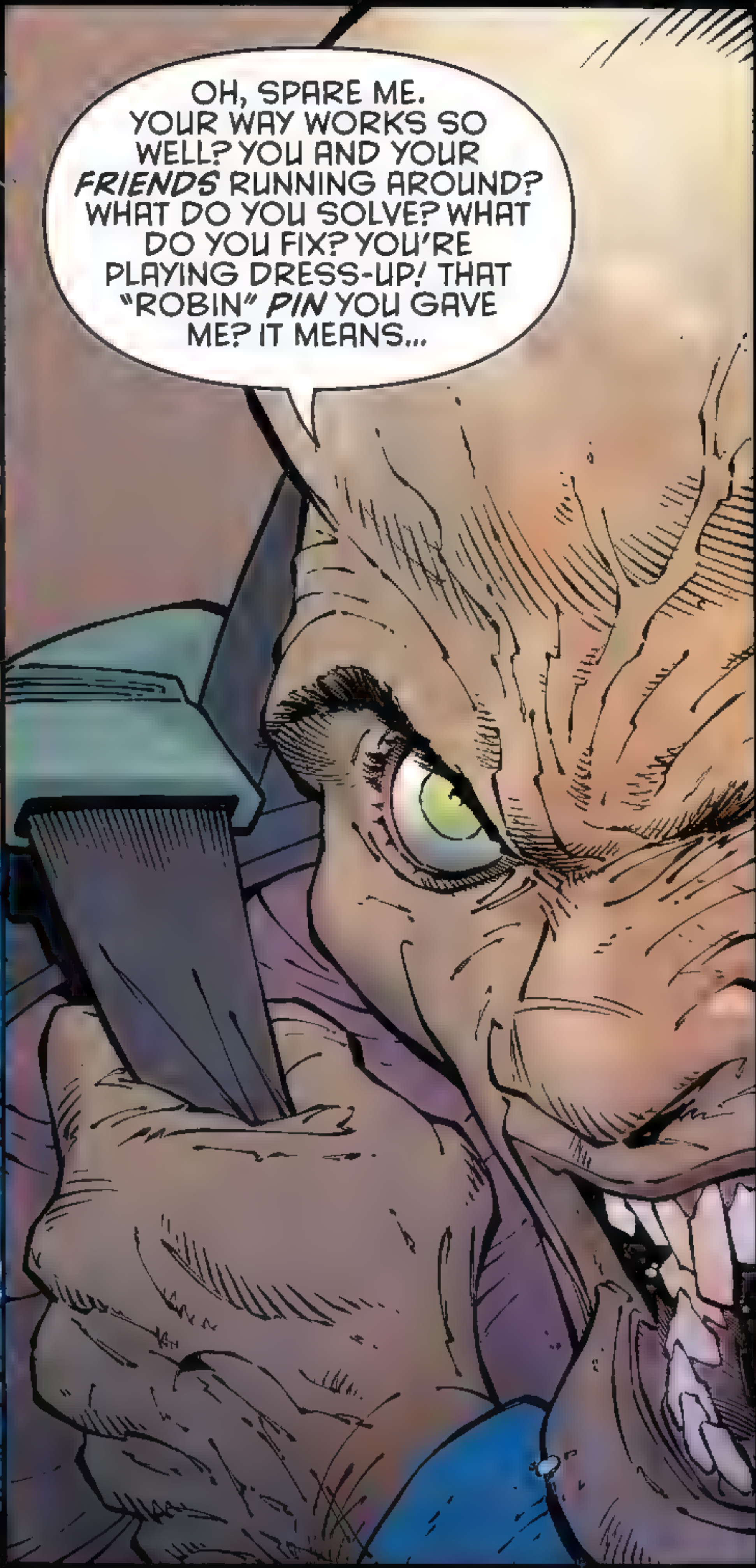


THAT CITY? THE ONE **BURNING** BELOW US?



THE SEEDS WEREN'T FINISHED. THEY'RE NOT BEING USED RIGHT! I TOLD Y--

LISTEN TO ME! YOU'RE LIKE A BROTHER, DARYL, BUT **POWERS** AREN'T THE ANSWER! THE ANSWER IS **US**, GOOD PEOPLE D--



OH, SPARE ME. YOUR WAY WORKS SO WELL? YOU AND YOUR **FRIENDS** RUNNING AROUND? WHAT DO YOU SOLVE? WHAT DO YOU FIX? YOU'RE PLAYING DRESS-UP! THAT "ROBIN" **PIN** YOU GAVE ME? IT MEANS...



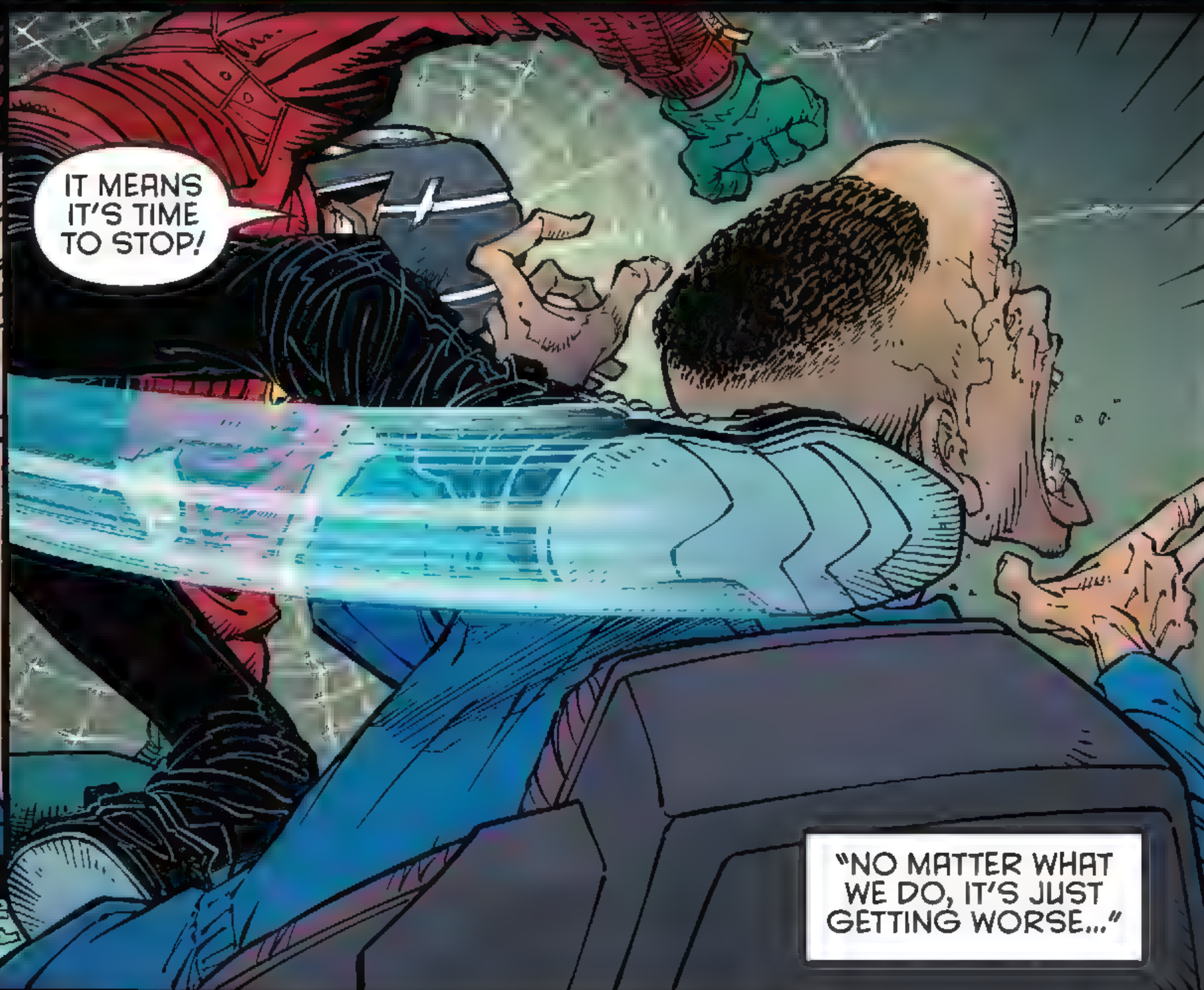
...NOTHING.

WHERE'D IT--



SHK

AAAGH!



IT MEANS IT'S TIME TO STOP!

"NO MATTER WHAT WE DO, IT'S JUST GETTING WORSE..."

"LOOK AT IT. LOOK. THE WHOLE THING..."

"EVERYTHING THAT'S BEEN BUBBLING BENEATH THE SURFACE...IT'S ALL ERUPTING. THE CITY IS FALLING APART!"



MA'AM. WE NEED TO GET YOU AWAY FROM HERE. THAT STRANGE STAR IS GOING TO RIP THIS WHOLE PLACE APART IN--

NO! GET OFF ME. THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING WE CAN...I CAN...

SOMETHING YOU CAN DO? THERE IS.



JIM, YOU'RE ALIVE?

=Uhh~ THAT'S DEBATABLE.

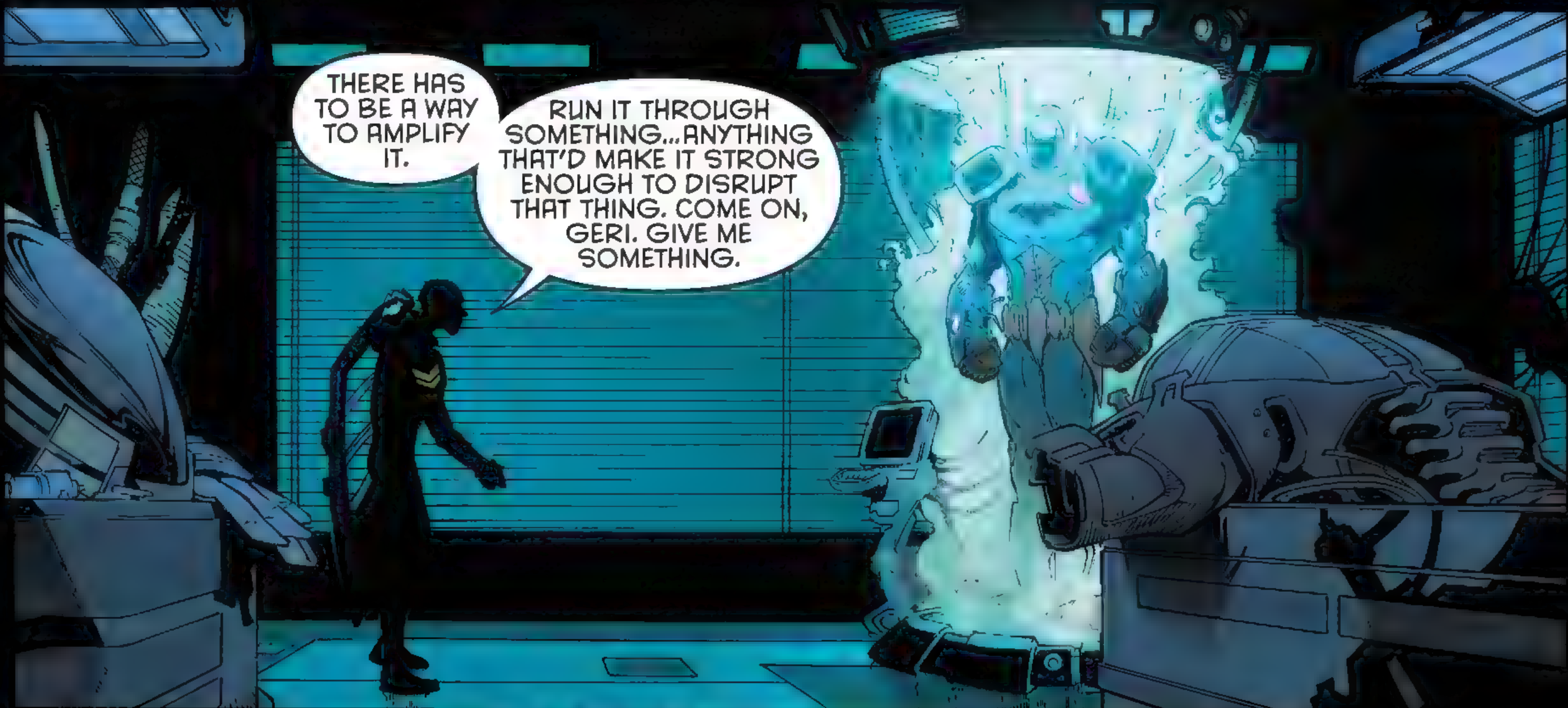
JIM, LISTEN--



NO, YOU LISTEN. THE DAMPENER WE USED AGAINST BLOOM BACK AT **BLOSSOM ROW**, THE ENERGY BLOCKER, IS IT STILL IN "THE CLOUD" OR THE "MAINFRAME" OR WHATEVER THE HELL THE **ROOKIE SUITS** USE FOR MEMORY?

YOU WANT TO USE A **ROOKIE SUIT** TO BEAM THAT ENERGY-DISRUPTING SIGNAL AT THE **STAR**? IT'D BE A DROP IN THE BUCKET, JIM. IT WOULDN'T EVEN BEGIN TO--





THERE HAS
TO BE A WAY
TO AMPLIFY
IT.

RUN IT THROUGH
SOMETHING...ANYTHING
THAT'D MAKE IT STRONG
ENOUGH TO DISRUPT
THAT THING. COME ON,
GERI. GIVE ME
SOMETHING.



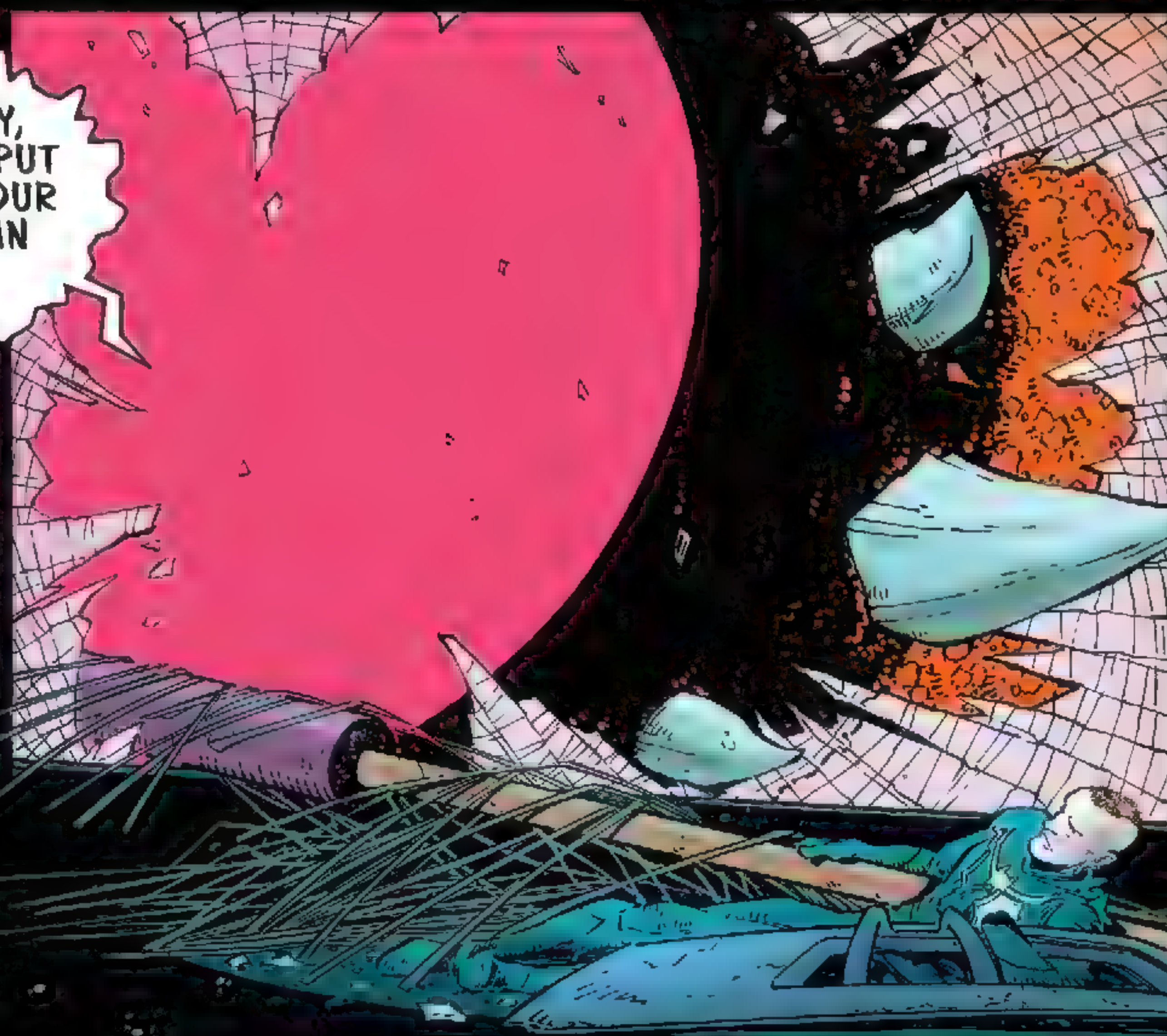
...

THE ONLY
POSSIBILITY
MIGHT BE IF YOU
HOOK INTO THE
BUILDING'S
ANTENNA,
BUT--



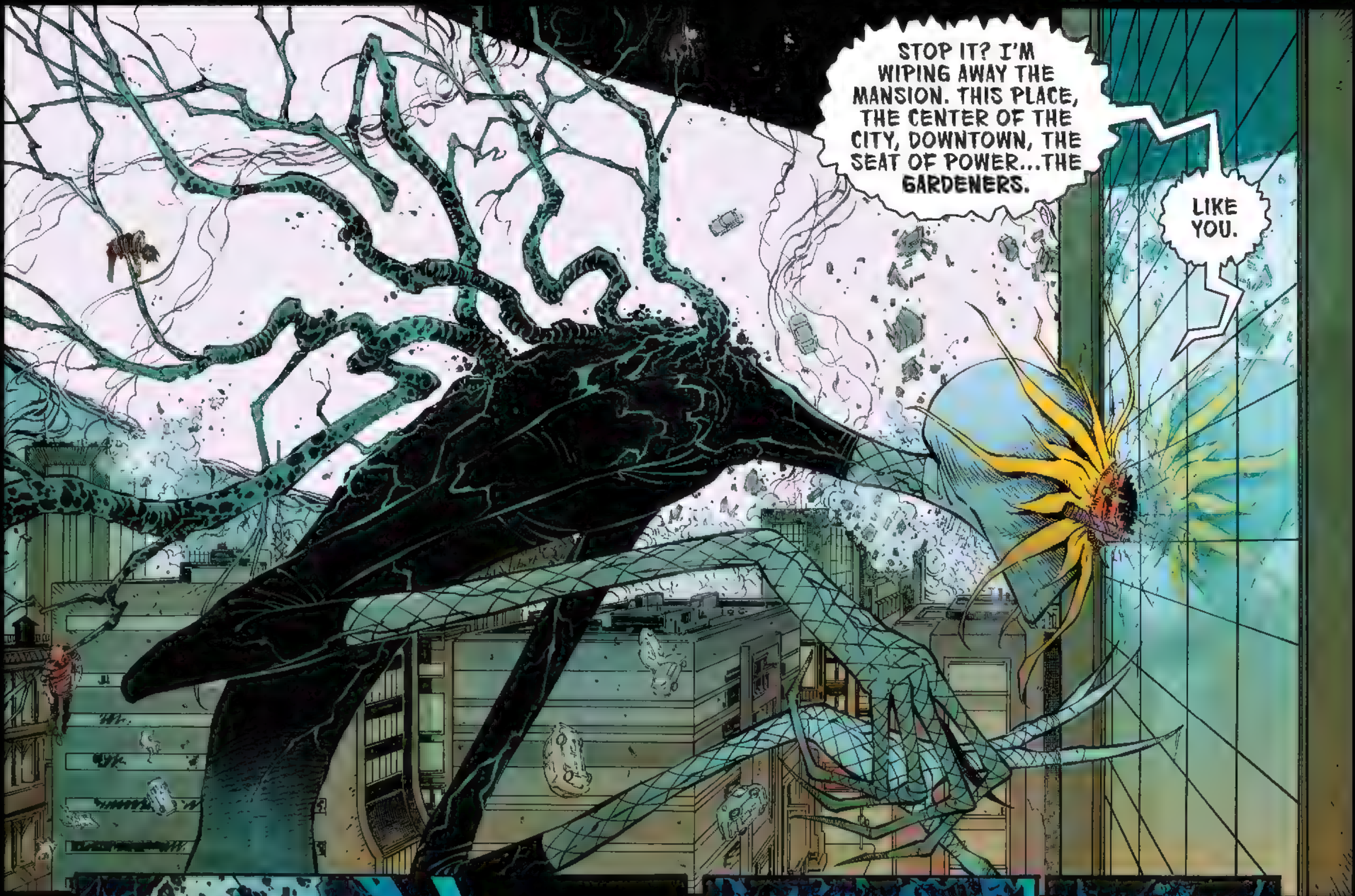
THIS
ANTENNA?

I'M SORRY,
JIM, DID I PUT
A KINK IN YOUR
LITTLE PLAN
AGAIN?



MY
PLAN...

BLOOM, LISTEN
TO ME, THERE WON'T
BE A CITY LEFT IF THAT
THING KEEPS GROWING.
WHATEVER YOU *THINK* IS
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF
ALL THIS, YOU'RE
WRONG. YOU HAVE
TO STOP IT!



STOP IT? I'M
WIPING AWAY THE
MANSION. THIS PLACE,
THE CENTER OF THE
CITY, DOWNTOWN, THE
SEAT OF POWER...THE
GARDENERS.

LIKE
YOU.

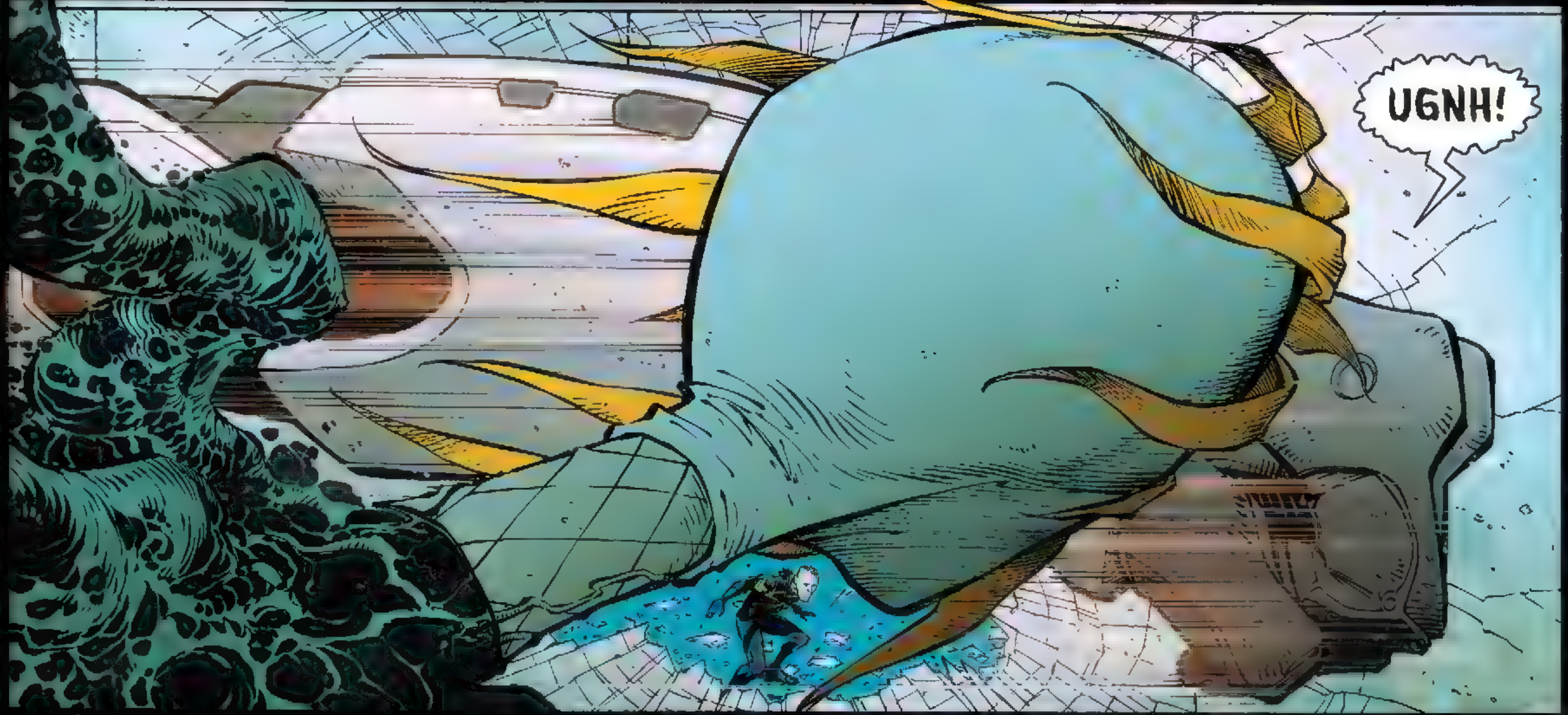


SEE, IT'S A
NEW MORNING,
JIM!

AFTERWARD,
THE CITY WILL BE A
WILD, WONDERFUL
GARDEN.



A CITY OF
FLOWERS!



UGNH!



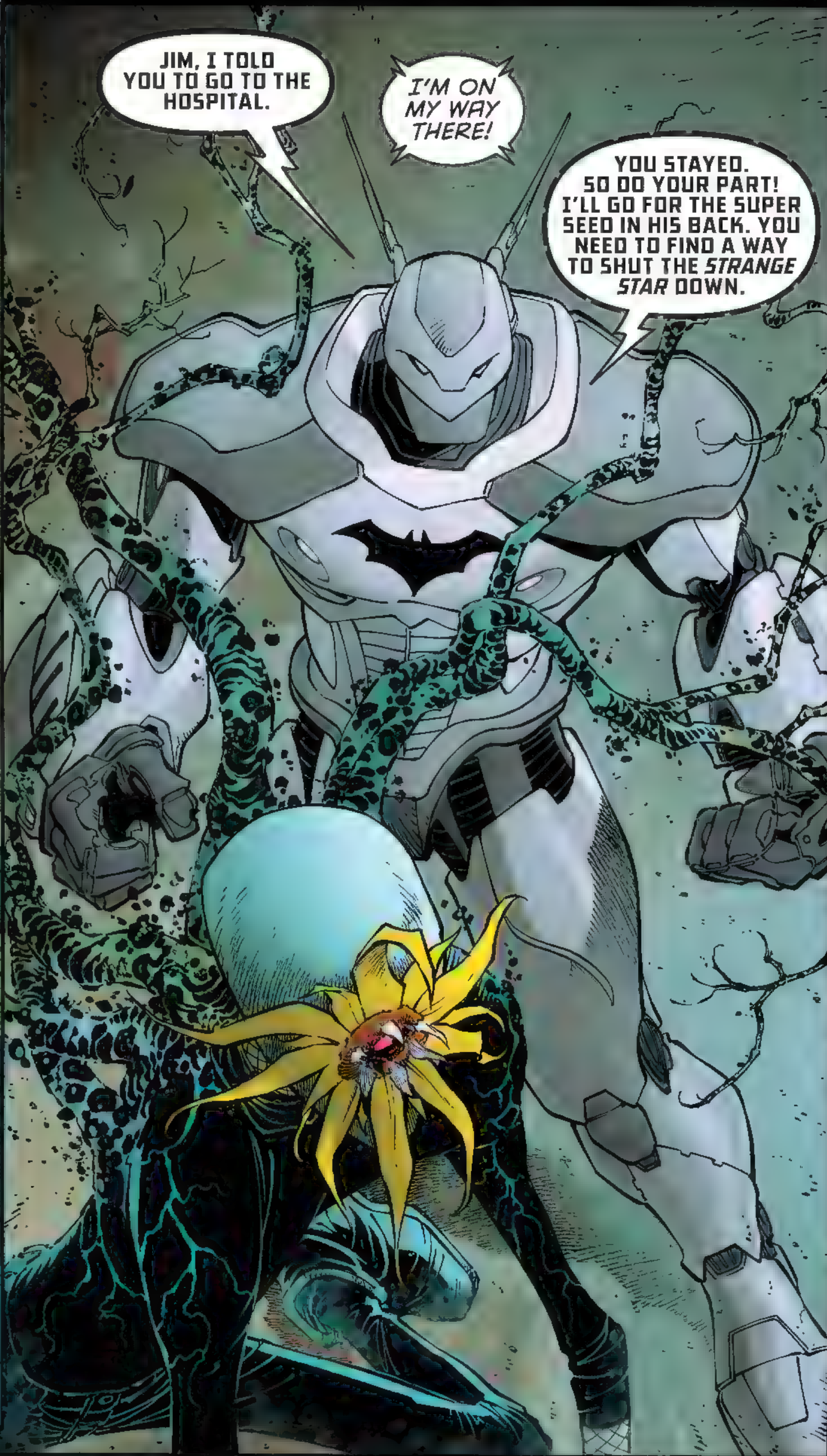
I'VE
GOT YOUR
FLOWERS
RIGHT
HERE.



WAIT!
STOP. LOOK.
DIDN'T THAT THING
LOOK LIKE THE
JOKER...?

UNLESS...
YOU THINK
IT'S HIM?

NO
WAY.



JIM, I TOLD
YOU TO GO TO THE
HOSPITAL.

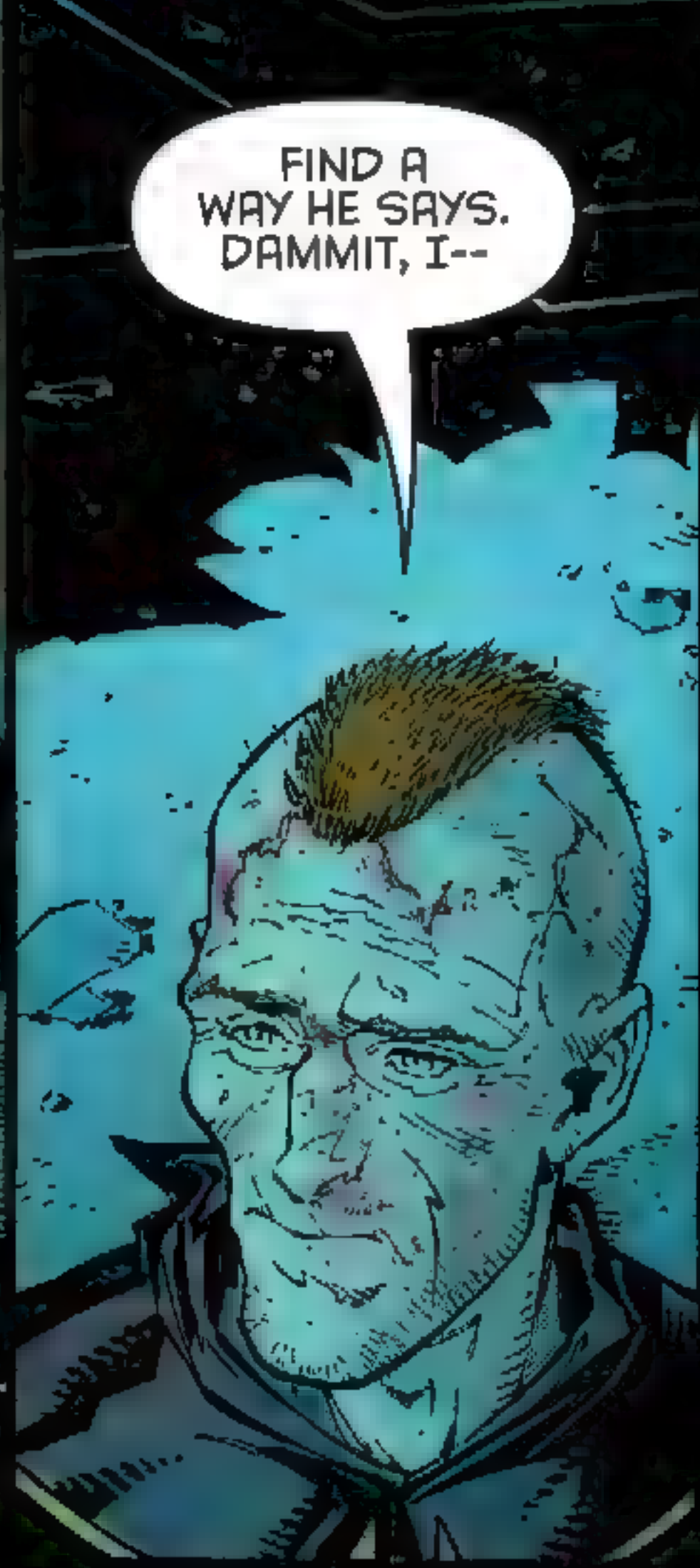
I'M ON
MY WAY
THERE!

YOU STAYED.
SO DO YOUR PART!
I'LL GO FOR THE SUPER
SEED IN HIS BACK. YOU
NEED TO FIND A WAY
TO SHUT THE *STRANGE*
STAR DOWN.



THAT'S WHAT
I WAS DOING,
BUT THE ANTENNA
IS GONE, BATMAN.
THERE'S NO WAY
TO AMPLIFY--

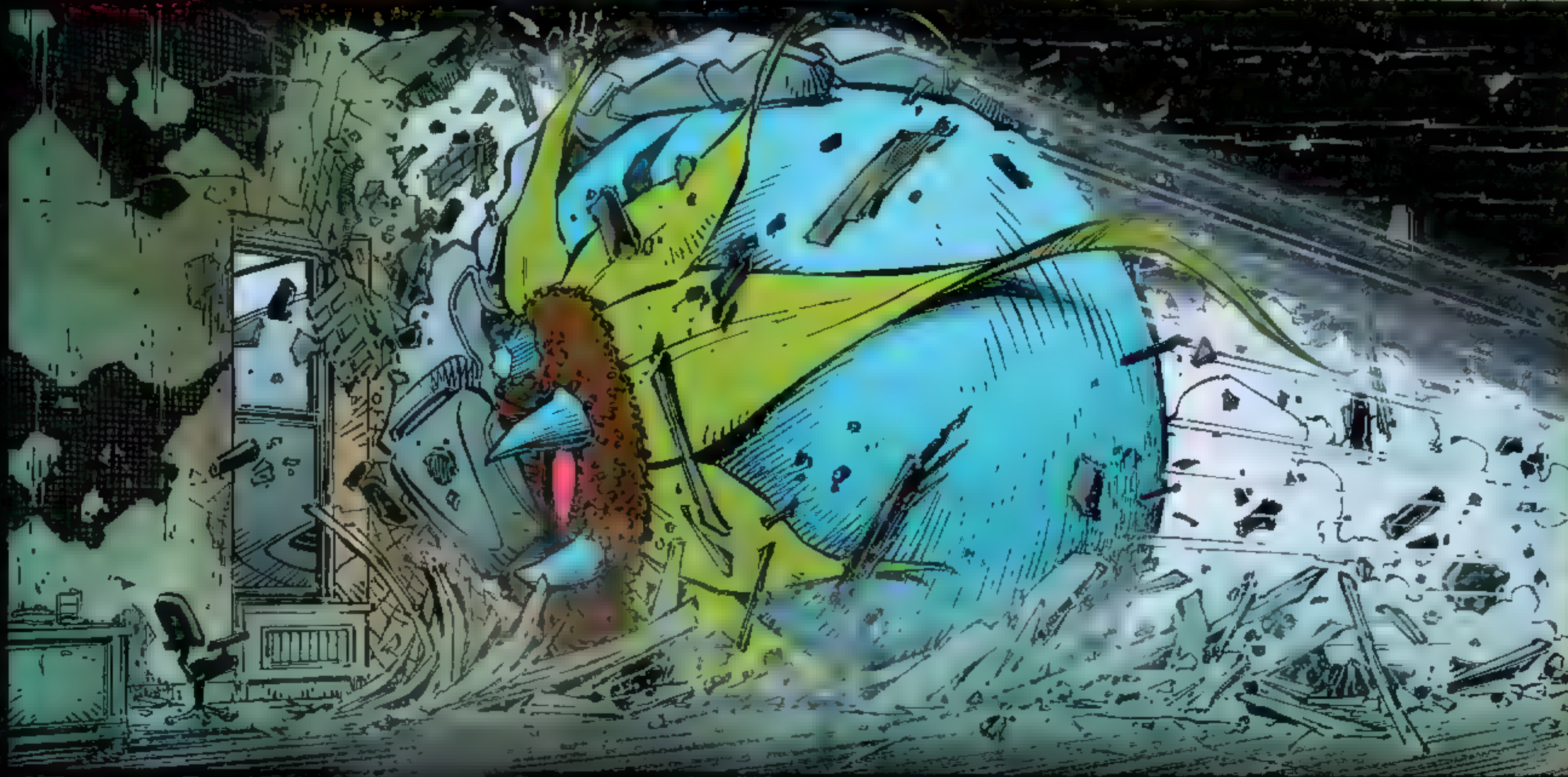
I DON'T
WANT TO
HEAR IT!
FIND A WAY!
NOW!

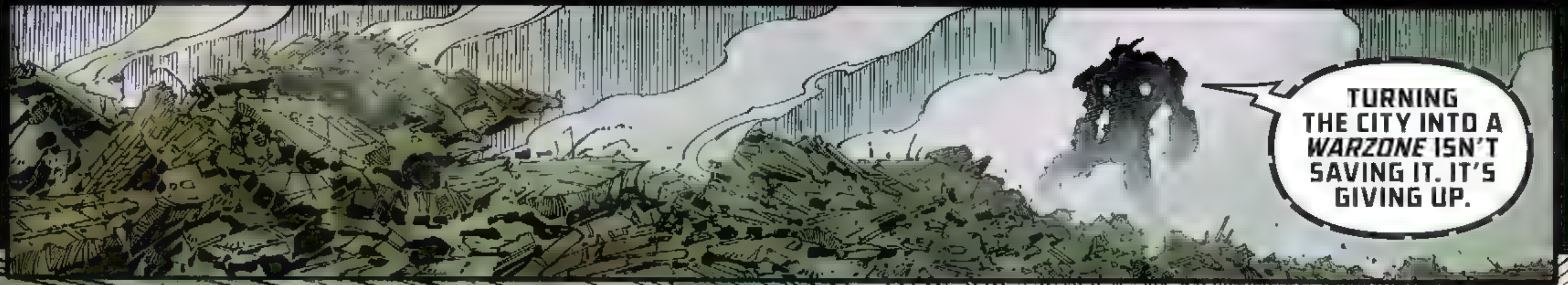


FIND A
WAY HE SAYS.
DAMMIT, I--

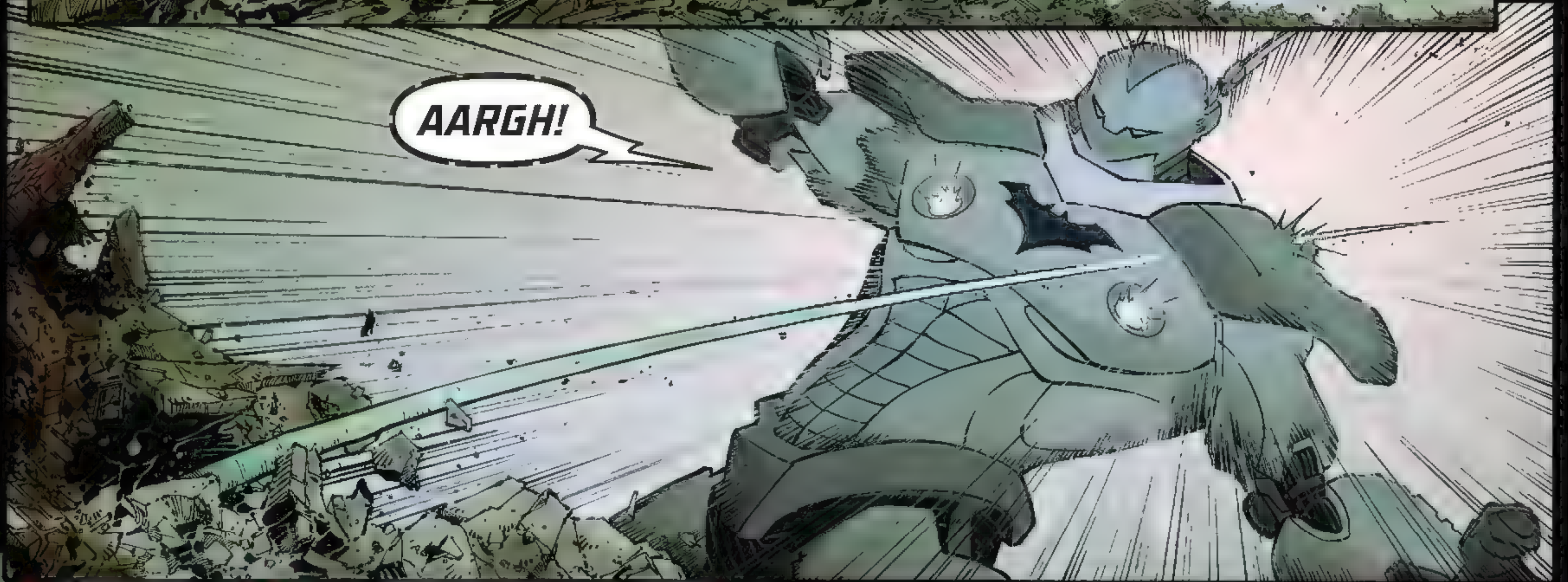


WAIT.





TURNING
THE CITY INTO A
WARZONE ISN'T
SAVING IT. IT'S
GIVING UP.

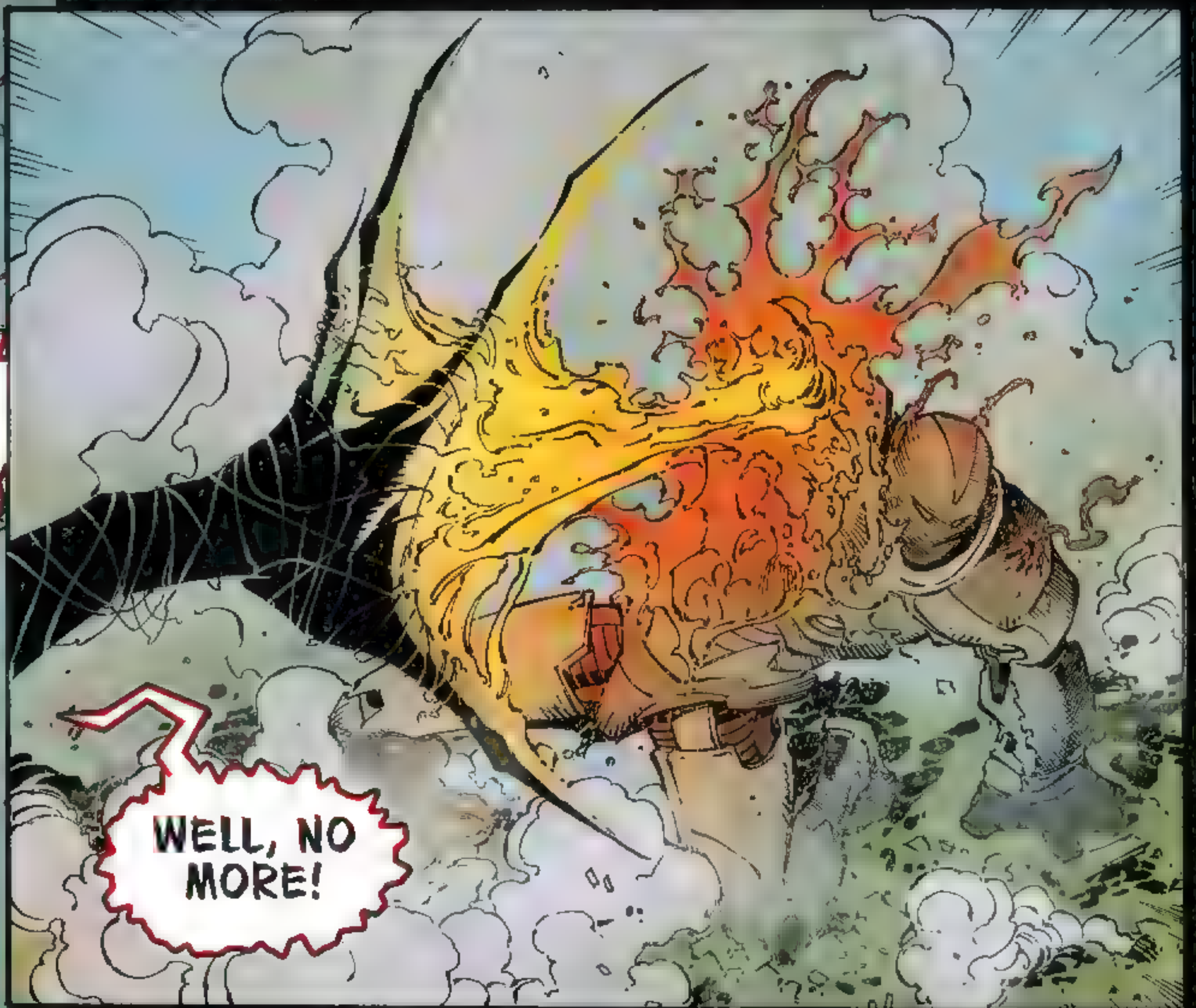


AARGH!

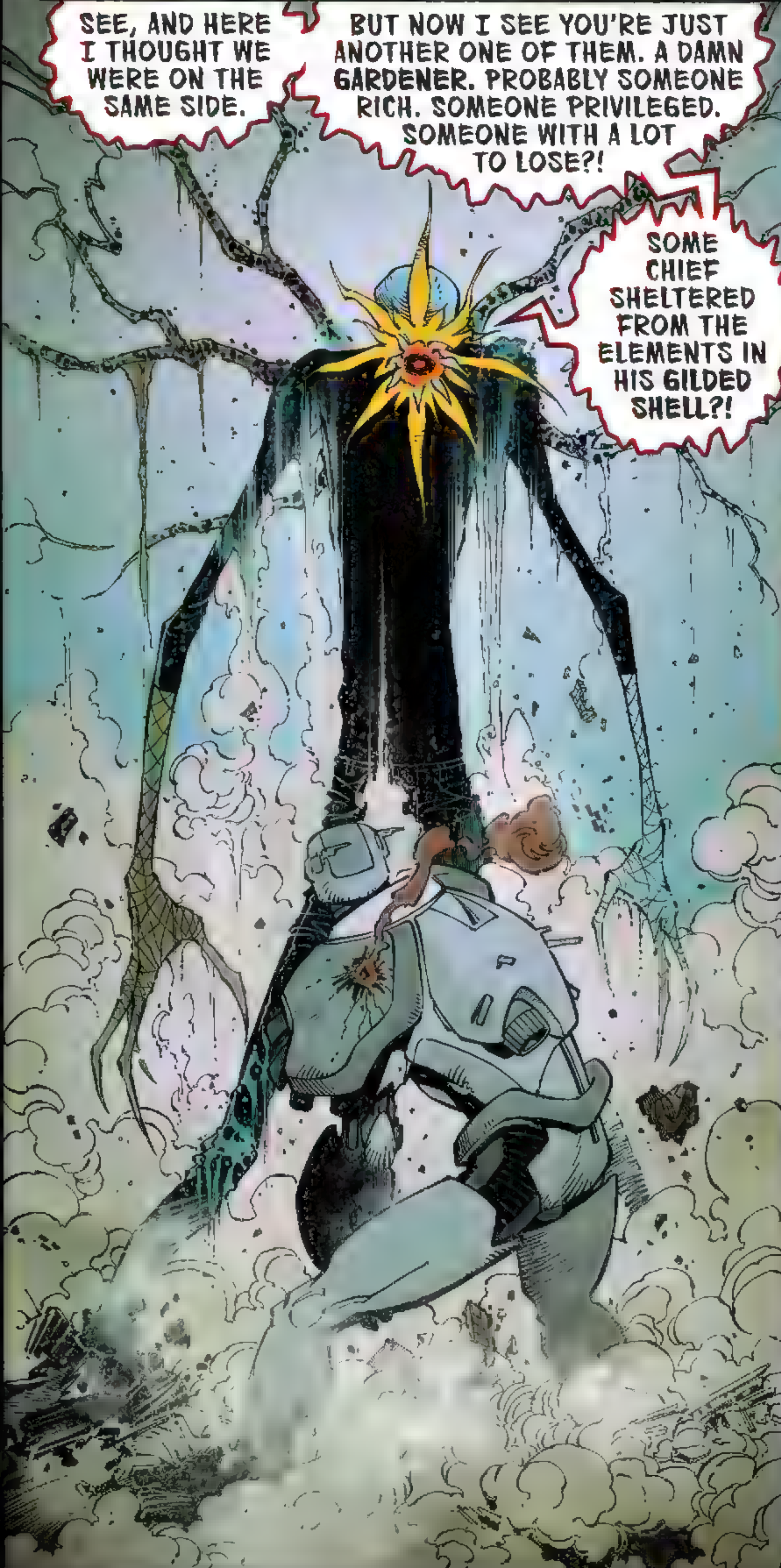
SEE, AND HERE
I THOUGHT WE
WERE ON THE
SAME SIDE.

BUT NOW I SEE YOU'RE JUST
ANOTHER ONE OF THEM. A DAMN
GARDENER. PROBABLY SOMEONE
RICH. SOMEONE PRIVILEGED.
SOMEONE WITH A LOT
TO LOSE?!

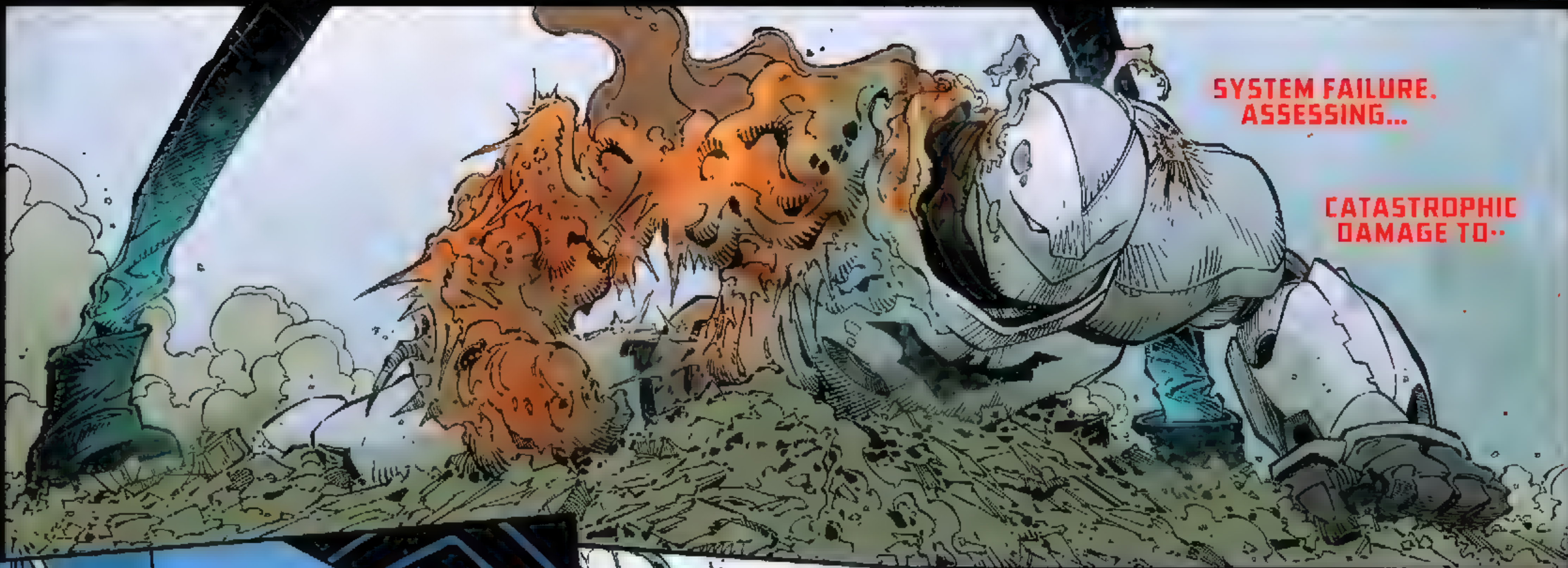
SOME
CHIEF
SHELTERED
FROM THE
ELEMENTS IN
HIS GILDED
SHELL?!



WELL, NO
MORE!



Unh!

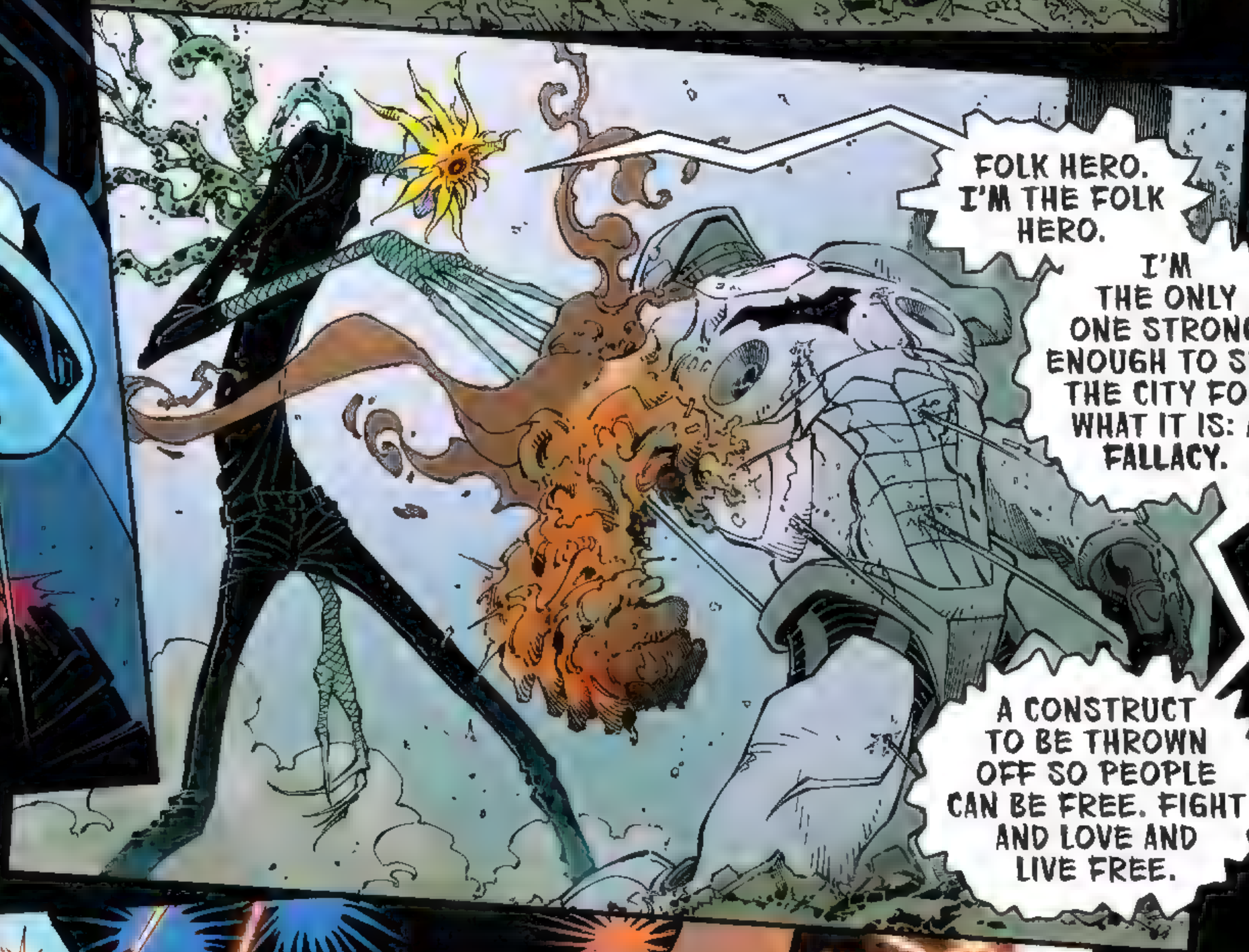


SYSTEM FAILURE.
ASSESSING...

CATASTROPHIC
DAMAGE TO...



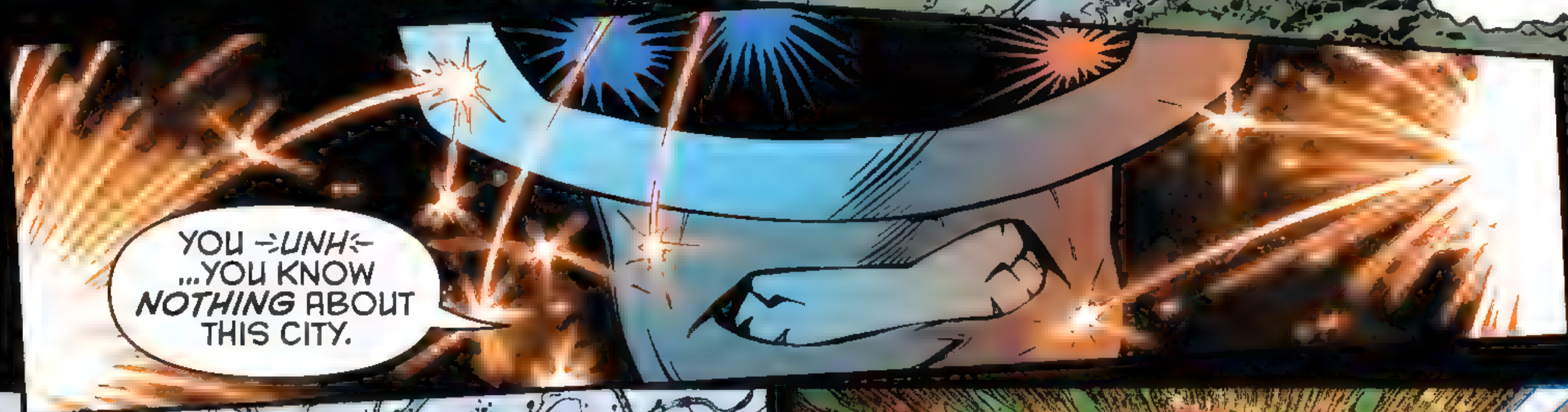
AARGH!



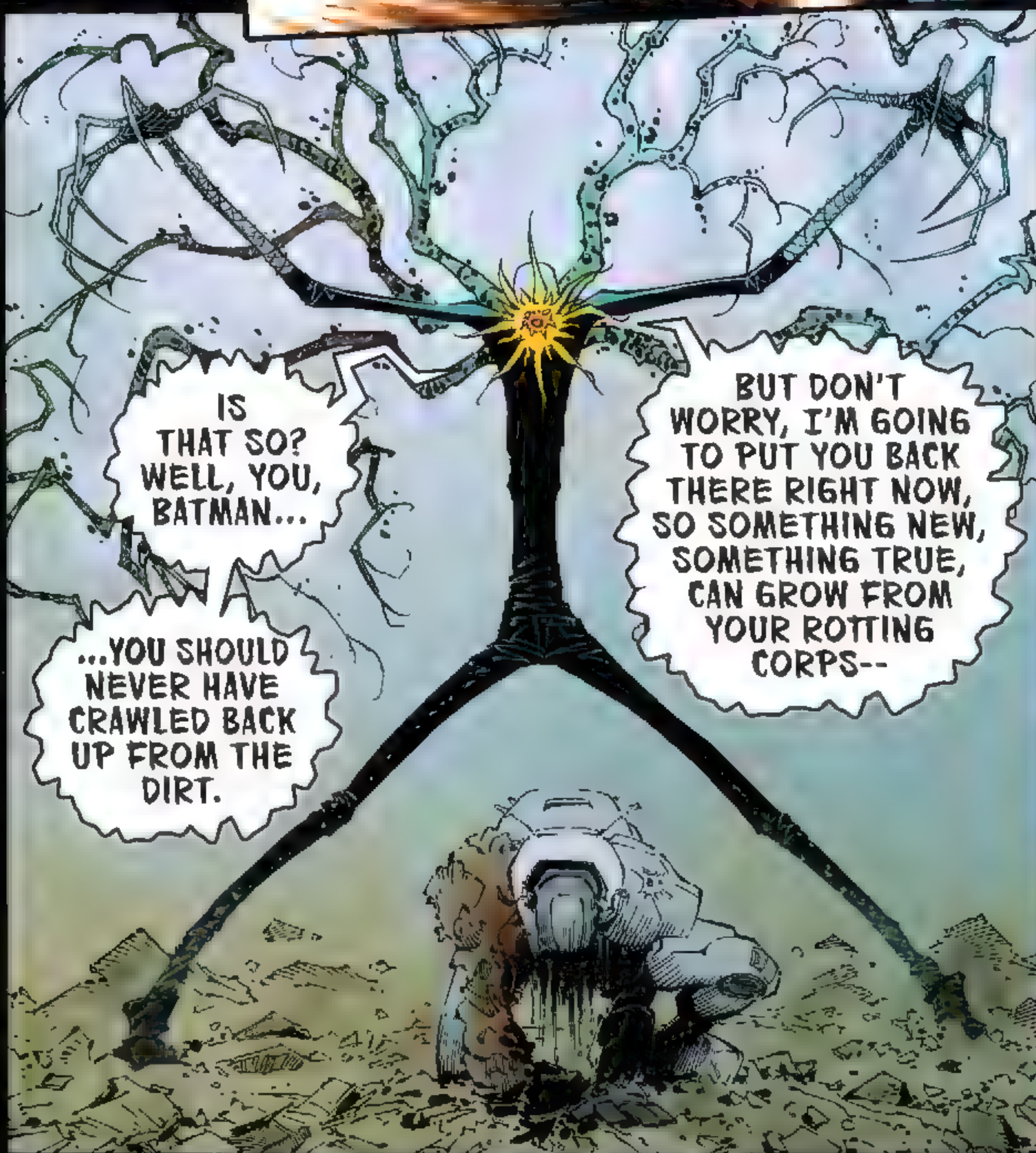
FOLK HERO.
I'M THE FOLK
HERO.

I'M
THE ONLY
ONE STRONG
ENOUGH TO SEE
THE CITY FOR
WHAT IT IS: A
FALLACY.

A CONSTRUCT
TO BE THROWN
OFF SO PEOPLE
CAN BE FREE. FIGHT
AND LOVE AND
LIVE FREE.



YOU -UNH-
...YOU KNOW
NOTHING ABOUT
THIS CITY.



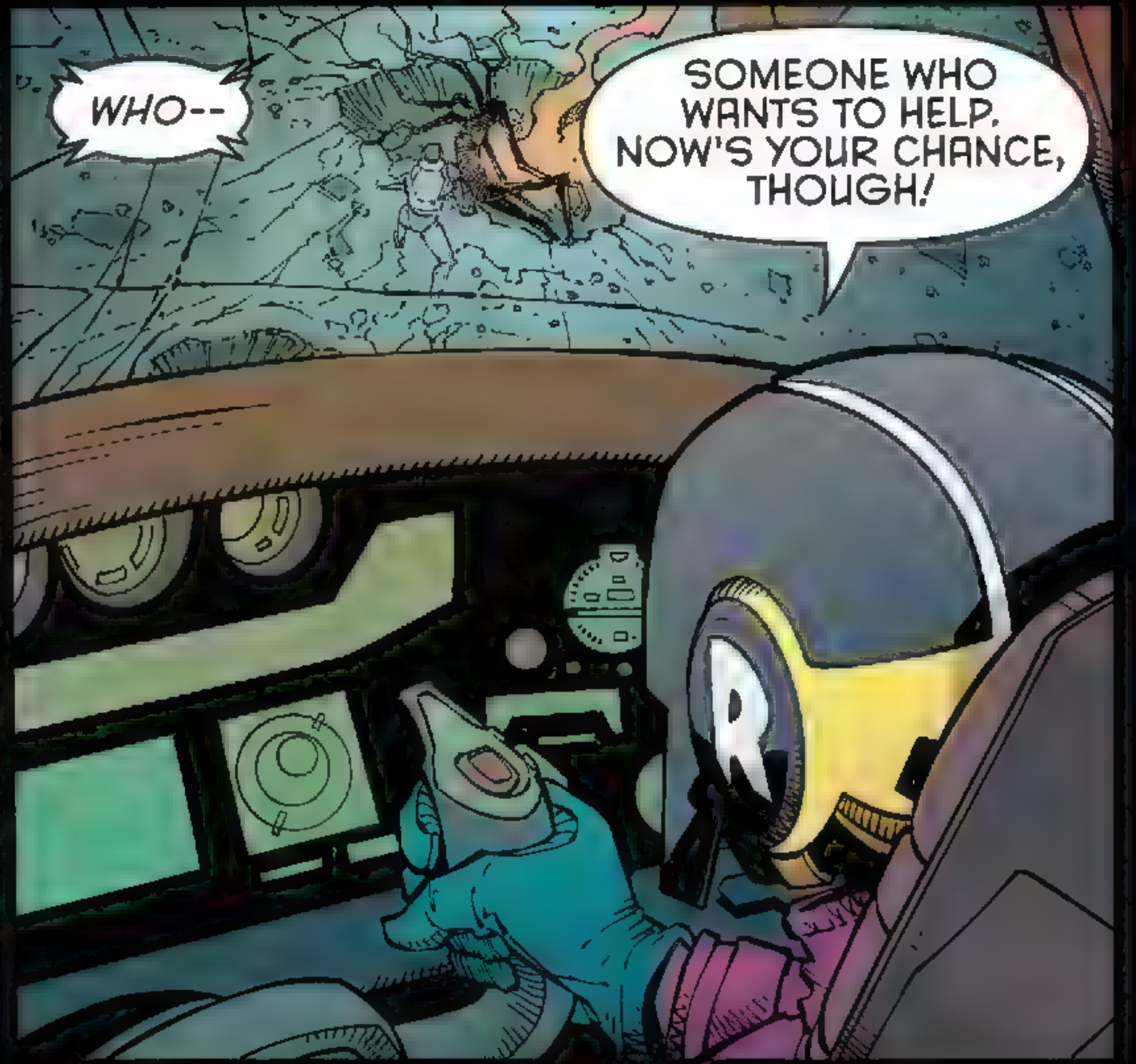
IS
THAT SO?
WELL, YOU,
BATMAN...

...YOU SHOULD
NEVER HAVE
CRAWLED BACK
UP FROM THE
DIRT.

BUT DON'T
WORRY, I'M GOING
TO PUT YOU BACK
THERE RIGHT NOW,
SO SOMETHING NEW,
SOMETHING TRUE,
CAN GROW FROM
YOUR ROTTING
CORPS--



BOOM



"...BEFORE WE SAY
GOODBYE."

YOU THINK DESTROYING MY
TRANSMITTER WILL DARKEN THE
NEW SUN?! ENOUGH PEOPLE
HAVE TAKEN SEEDS NOW THAT IT
DOESN'T NEED A TRANSMITTER!
IT'S IN THE AIR! IT'S POWERED
BY THE PEOPLE OF THIS
CITY, BATMAN!

IF IT BECOMES
SELF-SUSTAINING,
IT WON'T JUST
DESTROY THE CITY
CENTER, YOU FOOL!
IT'LL EAT THE *WHOLE*
CITY. MAYBE THE
DAMN STATE!

IT'LL BURN
JUST THE
RIGHT WAY. I
KNOW IT.

AND
NOW...TO
SWAT ONE
LAST BUG.

MAGNETS
ON POWER
CYCLE!
NOW!

WHAT
THE...LET
GO!

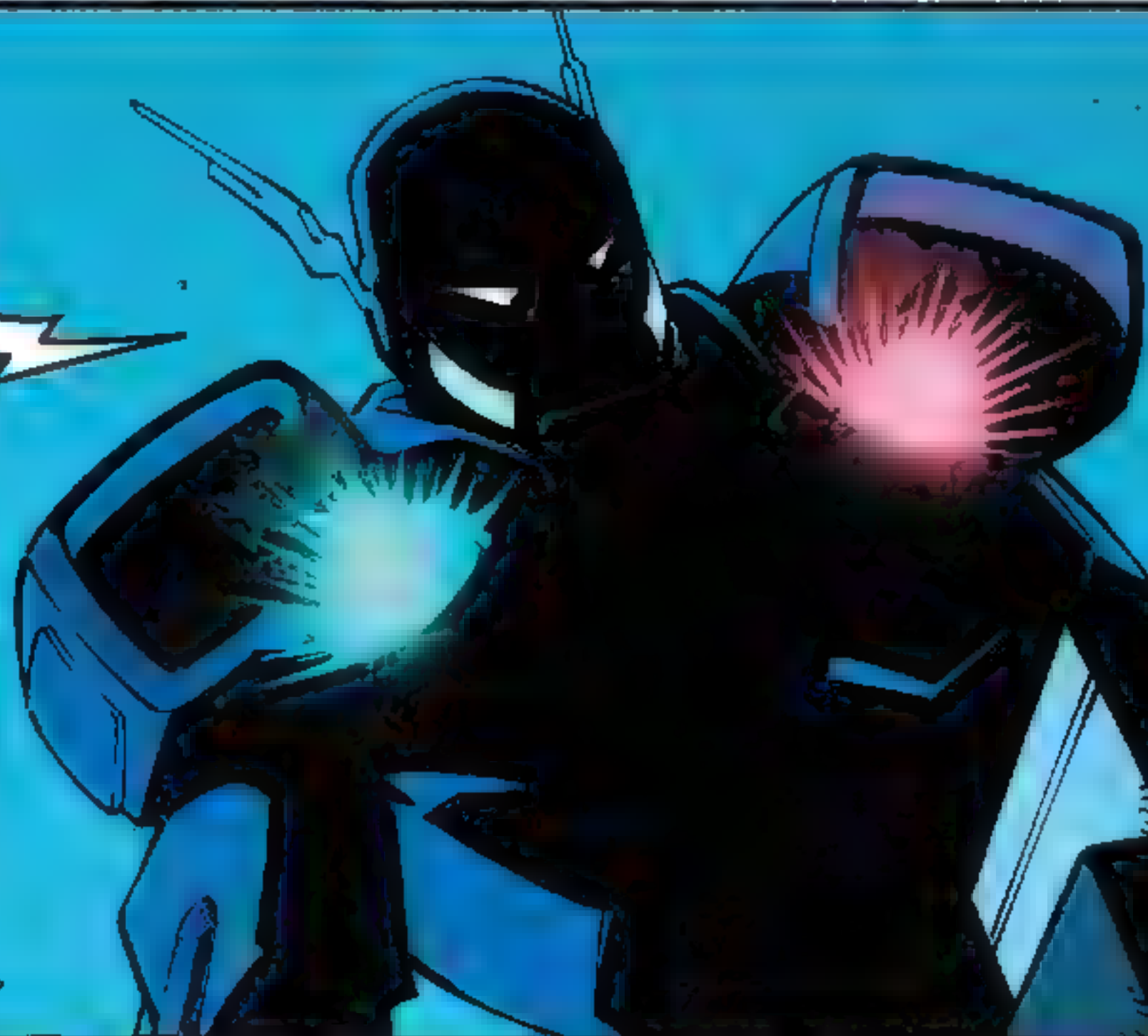
JIM! JIM,
IT'S GERI! TELL
ME YOU'RE OUT
OF THERE.
PLEASE.

THE WHOLE
BUILDING'S
COMING APART!
THE STAR IS
RIGHT ON TOP
OF YOU!



IN A MOMENT. I
JUST ~~COUGH~~
COUGH... I JUST HAD
TO PICK UP THAT OLD
HOUSEWARMING
GIFT YOU GOT
ME.

COULDN'T
LEAVE IT BEHIND. NO
ONE'S EVER GOTTEN
ME *BATMANIUM*
BEFORE.

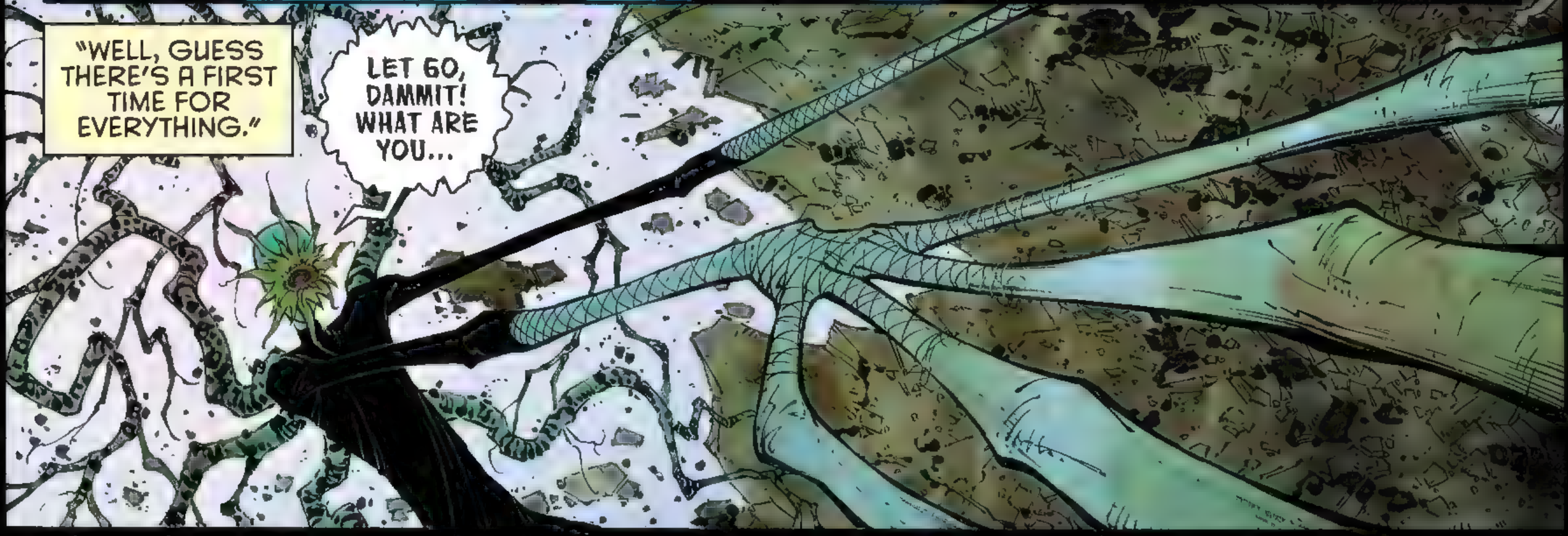


YOU SAID IT WAS
SUPERCONDUCTIVE,
RIGHT?

IN
THEORY! BUT
NO ONE'S EVER
TESTED IT
BEFORE!

"WELL, GUESS
THERE'S A FIRST
TIME FOR
EVERYTHING."

LET GO,
DAMMIT!
WHAT ARE
YOU...



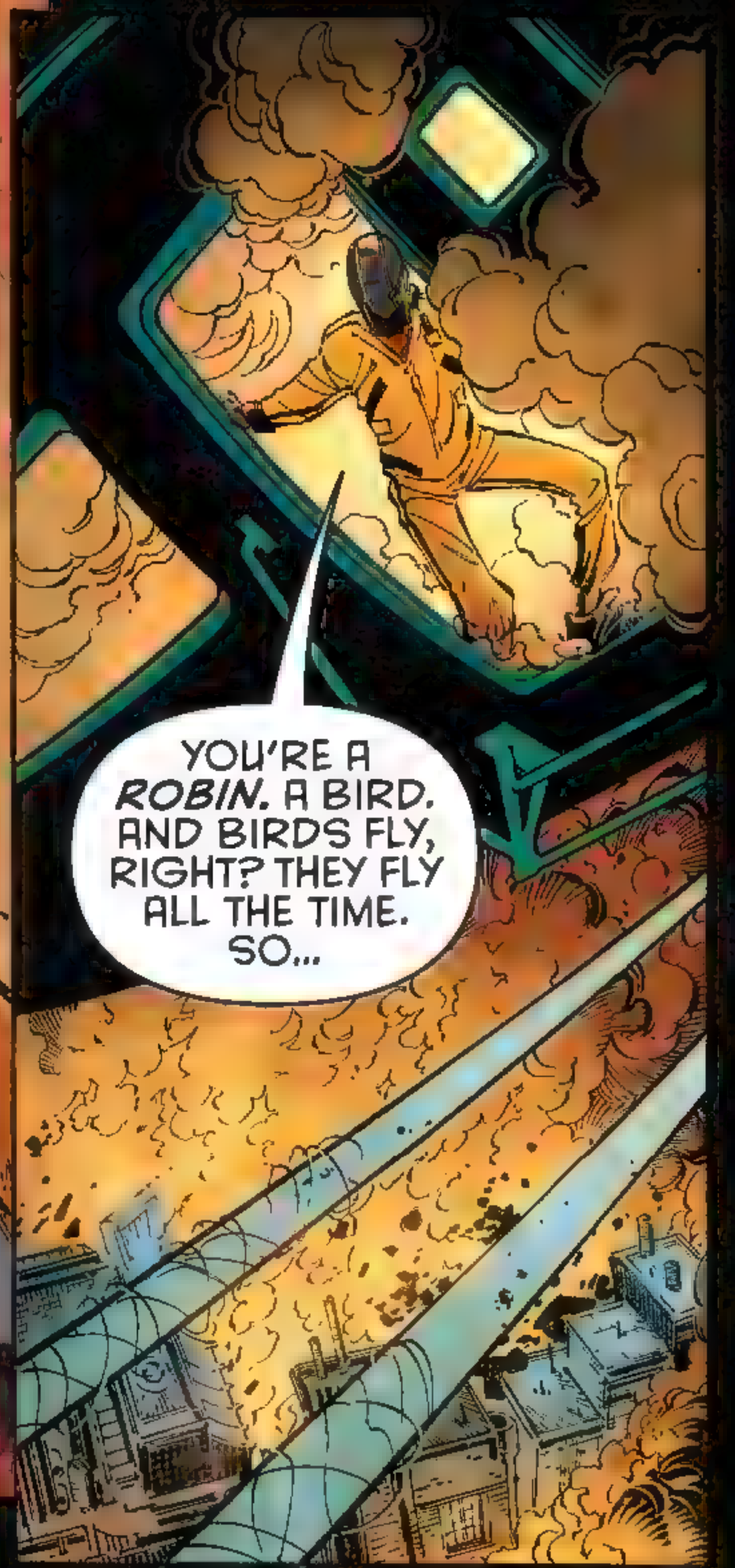
THE MORE
ENERGY YOU EXHIBIT,
THE STRONGER THE
MAGNET PULLS. JUST
LIKE YOU SAID, YOU'RE
POWERED BY THE *WILL*
OF THIS CITY,
BY *US*...

...AND BELIEVE
ME WHEN I SAY OUR
WILL IS TO HAVE
YOUR FLOWER ASS
GONE!





~Huff
Huff~ OKAY.
YOU CAN DO
THIS, DUKE.



YOU'RE A
ROBIN. A BIRD.
AND BIRDS FLY,
RIGHT? THEY FLY
ALL THE TIME.
SO...



...FLY!



NO!

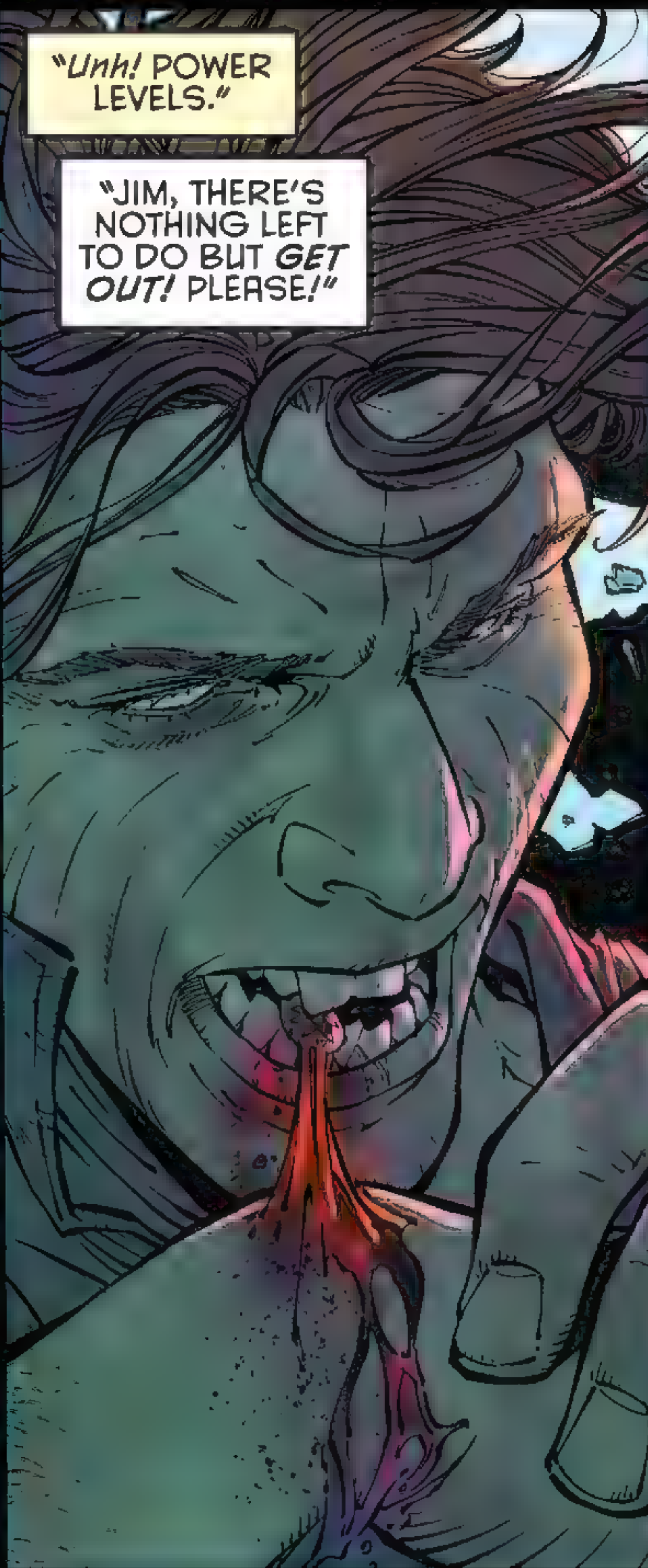




GERI,
COUGH THE
POWER LEVELS
OUTSIDE.

FROM
THE
SEEDS?

THEY'RE
HIGH,
JIM.



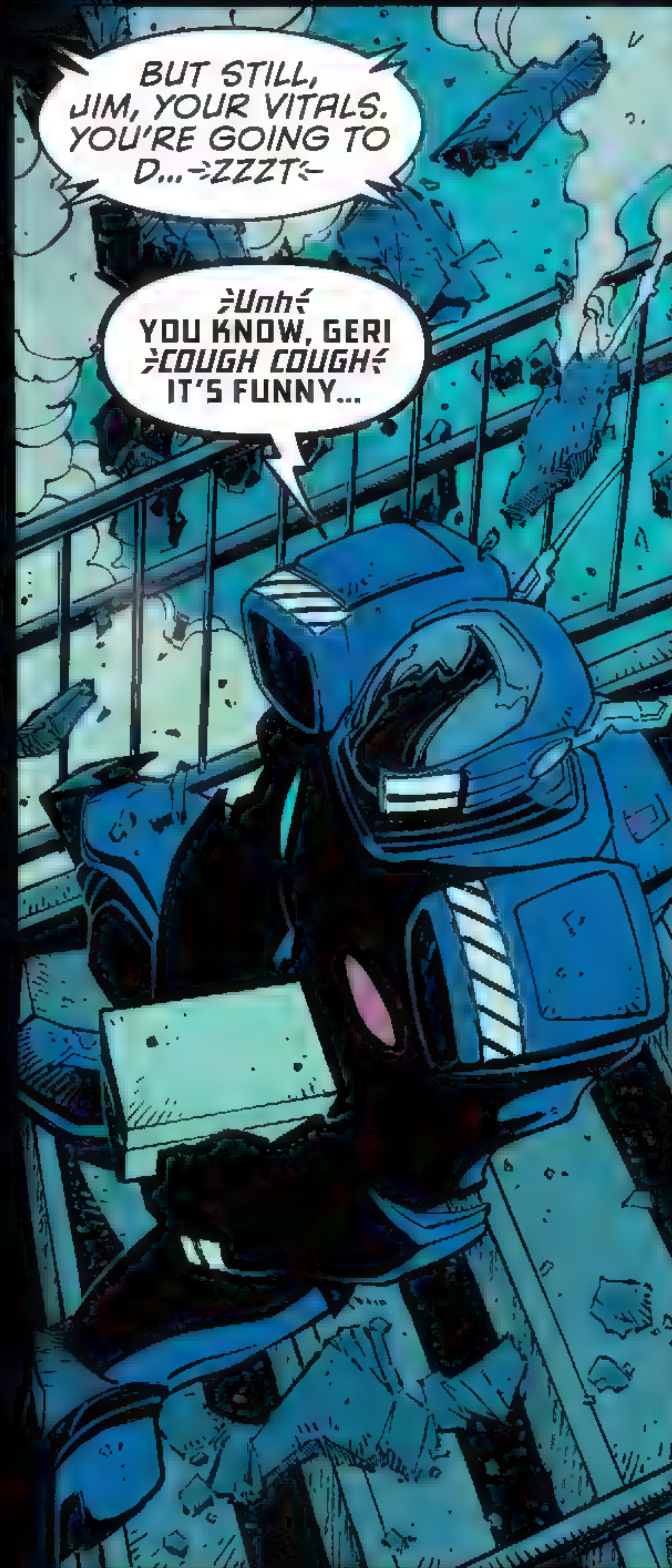
"Unh! POWER
LEVELS."

"JIM, THERE'S
NOTHING LEFT
TO DO BUT GET
OUT! PLEASE!"



"POWER
LEVELS!"

"THEY'RE...
THEY'RE
GOING
DOWN."

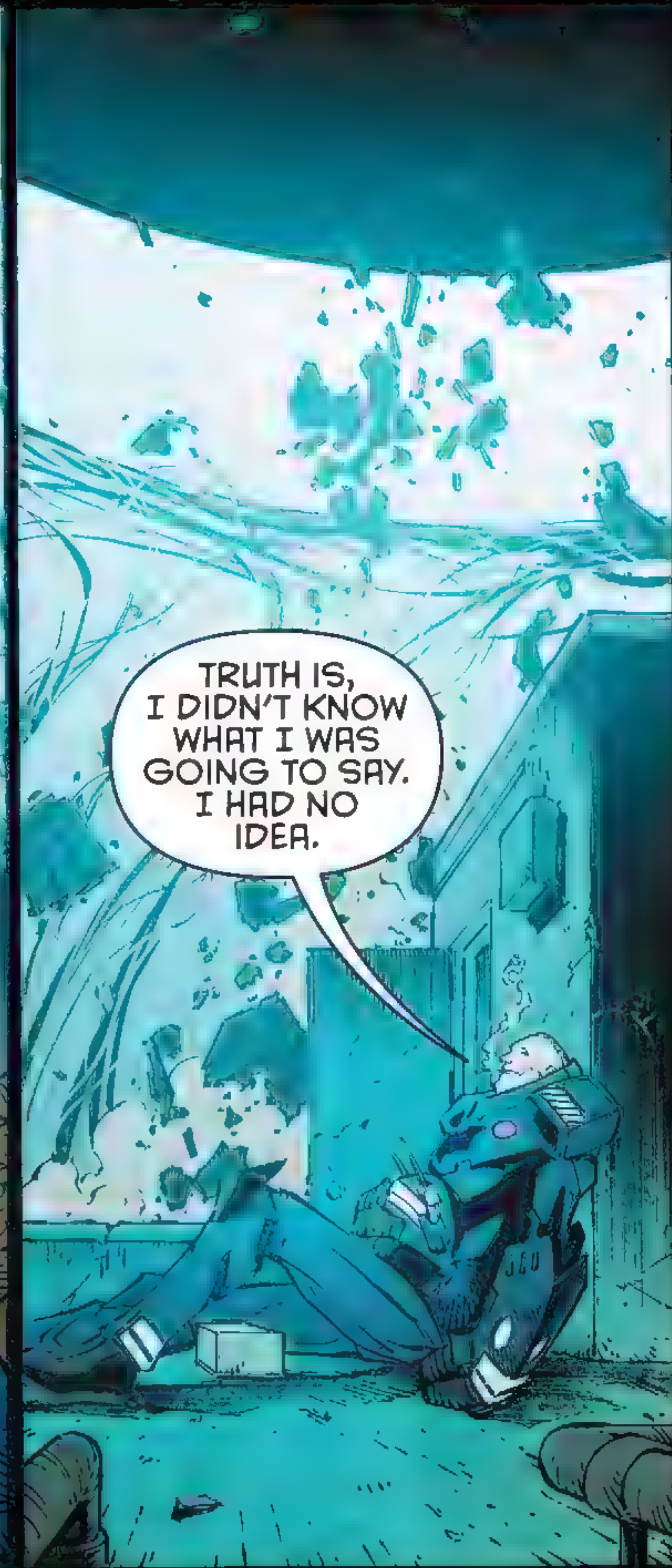


BUT STILL,
JIM, YOUR VITALS.
YOU'RE GOING TO
D...ZZZT~

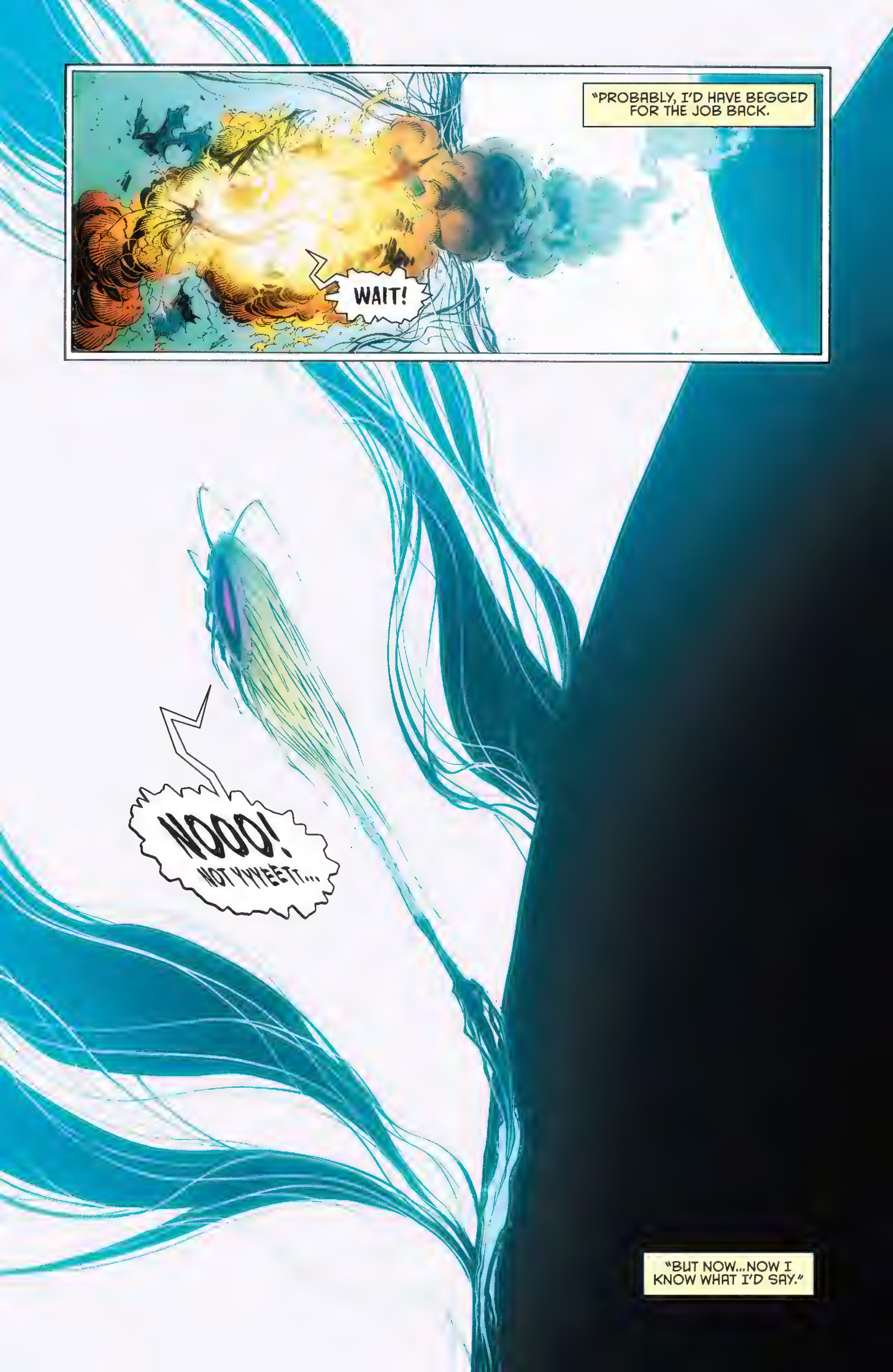
Unh
YOU KNOW, GERI
COUGH COUGH
IT'S FUNNY...



"...THE OTHER DAY, WHEN
YOU WANTED ME TO
SPEAK TO EVERYONE, TO
GIVE A SPEECH ABOUT
OUR BATMAN? WHEN YOU
CANNED ME?"



TRUTH IS,
I DIDN'T KNOW
WHAT I WAS
GOING TO SAY.
I HAD NO
IDEA.



"PROBABLY, I'D HAVE BEGGED
FOR THE JOB BACK."

WAIT!

NOOOO!

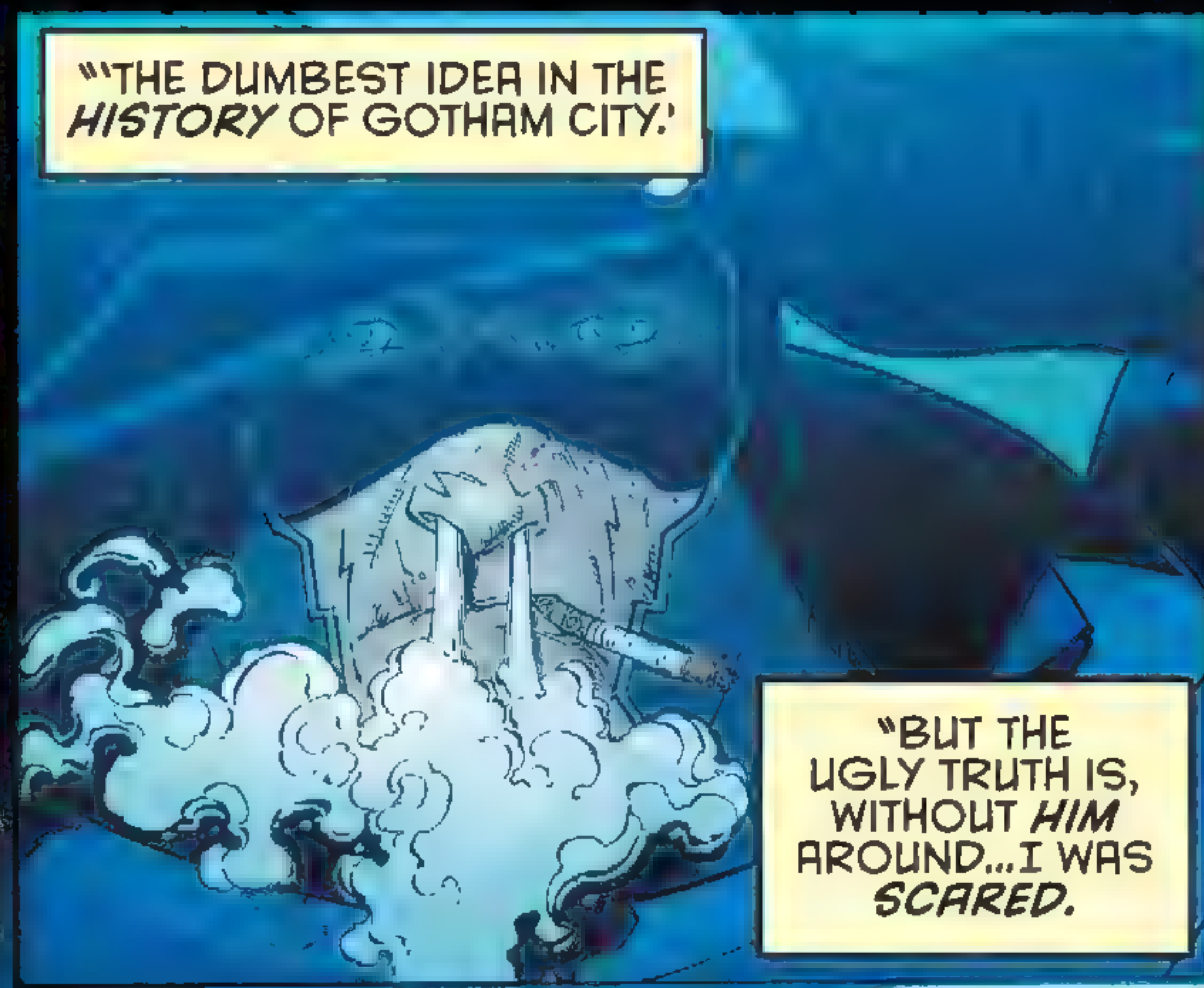
NOT YYYEET...

"BUT NOW...NOW I
KNOW WHAT I'D SAY."

"I'D SAY THAT MY BEING
BATMAN? ME, JIM GORDON?
IT WAS A *MISTAKE*.



"THE DUMBEST IDEA IN THE
HISTORY OF GOTHAM CITY!



"BUT THE
UGLY TRUTH IS,
WITHOUT *HIM*
AROUND...I WAS
SCARED.

"I WASN'T SCARED OF
MONSTERS OR DAMN
SUPER-VILLAINS. BUT
REAL THINGS.

"WHAT IF THE
SYSTEM DOESN'T
WORK? EVERYTHING
I'VE FOUGHT FOR
MY WHOLE LIFE. THE
CITY ITSELF.

"WHAT IF IT'S ALL
BROKEN AND
UNFAIR AND...
UNFIXABLE?



"I DON'T KNOW
WHAT MAKES
YOU SCARED.
WHAT MAKES
YOU *RAGE*. MAY
BE THAT YOU'LL
NEVER GET A
CHANCE. OR
THAT THE CHIPS
ARE STACKED
AGAINST YOU
AND ALWAYS
WILL BE. OR
WORSE, AGAINST
YOUR KIDS.



"MAYBE YOU
JUST WANT A
SUPERHERO
TO *FIX* IT ALL.
WELL...I TRIED
TO *BE* THAT
SUPERHERO.
TO FIX WHAT
I *COULDN'T*
FIX AS JIM
GORDON.



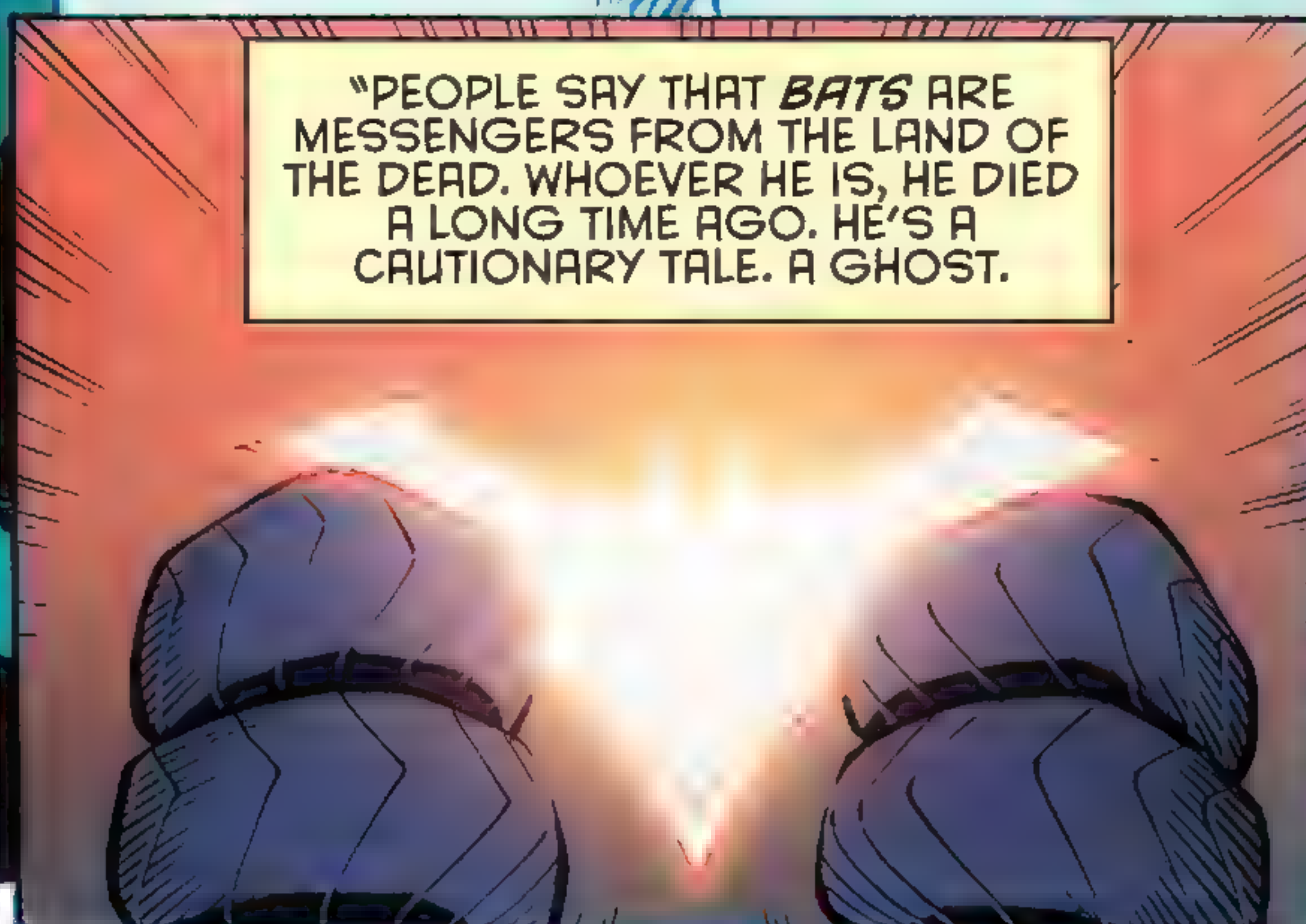
"BUT SUPERHEROES NEVER
FIX THOSE THINGS FOR US.
NOT EVEN BATMAN. HE CAN'T
FIX THE *REAL* THINGS...



"...BECAUSE
HE'S *NOT*
REAL."



"I'VE FELT IT,
STANDING ON
THE ROOFTOPS
WITH HIM.



"PEOPLE SAY THAT **BATS** ARE
MESSENGERS FROM THE LAND OF
THE DEAD. WHOEVER HE IS, HE DIED
A LONG TIME AGO. HE'S A
CAUTIONARY TALE. A GHOST.

"HE FIGHTS OUR
NIGHTMARES TO
TEACH US TO FIGHT
THE REAL TERRORS
BY LIGHT OF DAY.

"HE **BELIEVES** IN US, GERI.
THAT'S THE REASON THE
POWER LEVELS ARE GOING
DOWN--THE **SEEDS** ARE
COMING OUT. IT'S
WHY I'M **HERE**.

"NOT BECAUSE BATMAN
CAN SAVE US. BUT
BECAUSE HE BELIEVES WE
WILL **SAVE OURSELVES**.
HE'S THE SUPERHERO
WHO SEES IN US THE
HEROES WE CAN BE.

"AND THROUGH HIM,
WE'RE REMINDED
THAT PLACES LIKE
GOTHAM? THEY'RE
LEAPS OF **FAITH**.

"THEY'RE A BUNCH OF
PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE--
MAYBE STUPIDLY--THAT
WE'RE **STRONGER**
FOR OUR DIFFERENCES
THAN NOT.

"WE MIGHT HATE EACH
OTHER, OR FEAR EACH
OTHER, BUT WE'RE
GOTHAM. AN '**ISLAND OF
STABILITY**' AS YOU
CALLED IT, WHERE BRAVE
NEW THINGS ARE MADE.

"TRUTH IS, I
FORGOT THAT
FOR A WHILE.

"BUT LIKE
EVERYONE ELSE
OUT THERE, I
REMEMBER NOW."



RUN THE
BLOCKER,
ROOKIE.

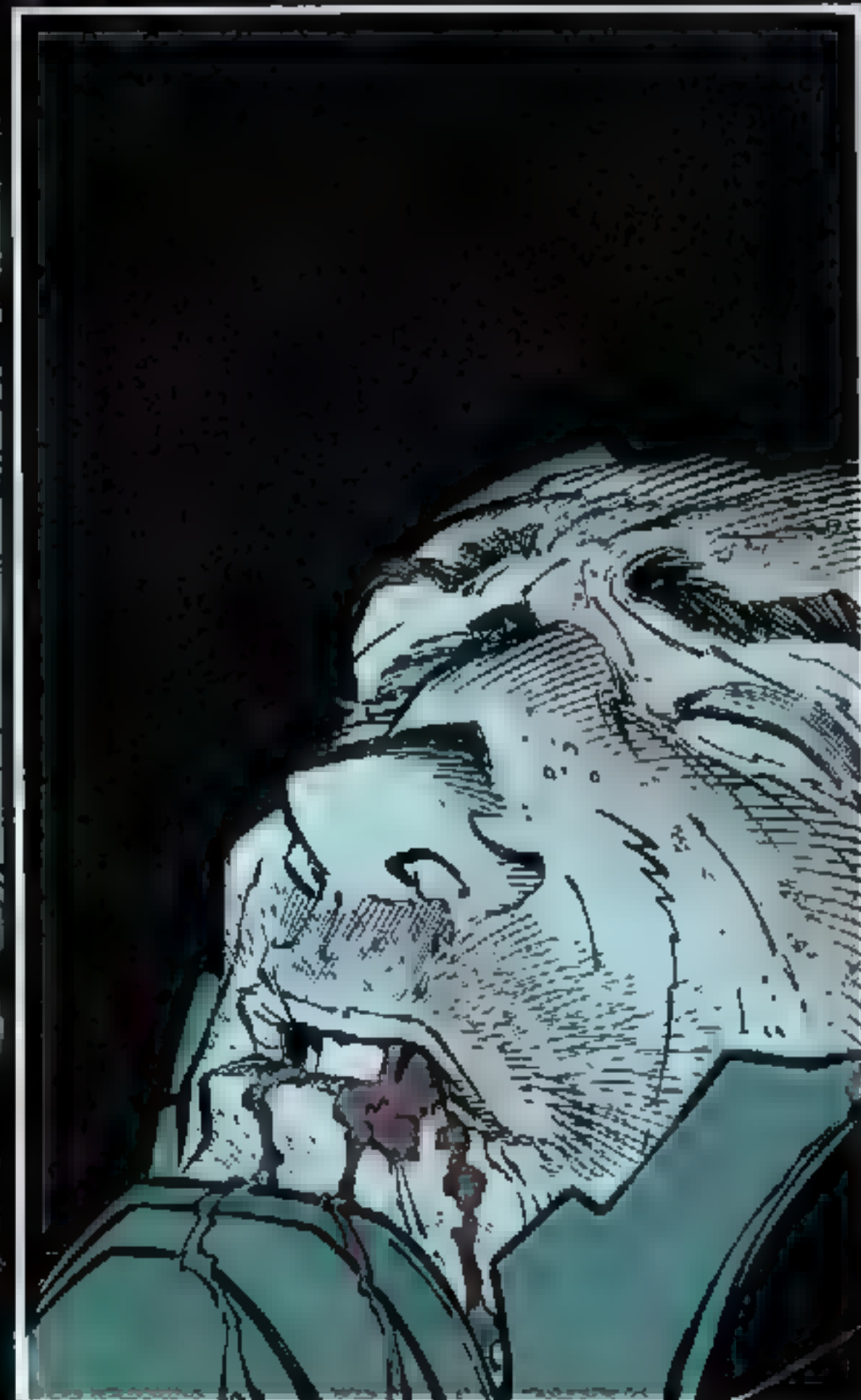
SEMPER FI.

THE
POWERRRRR!!
I'M--

POOM

SCREEEEEE!!

NOOOO



EPILOGUE.

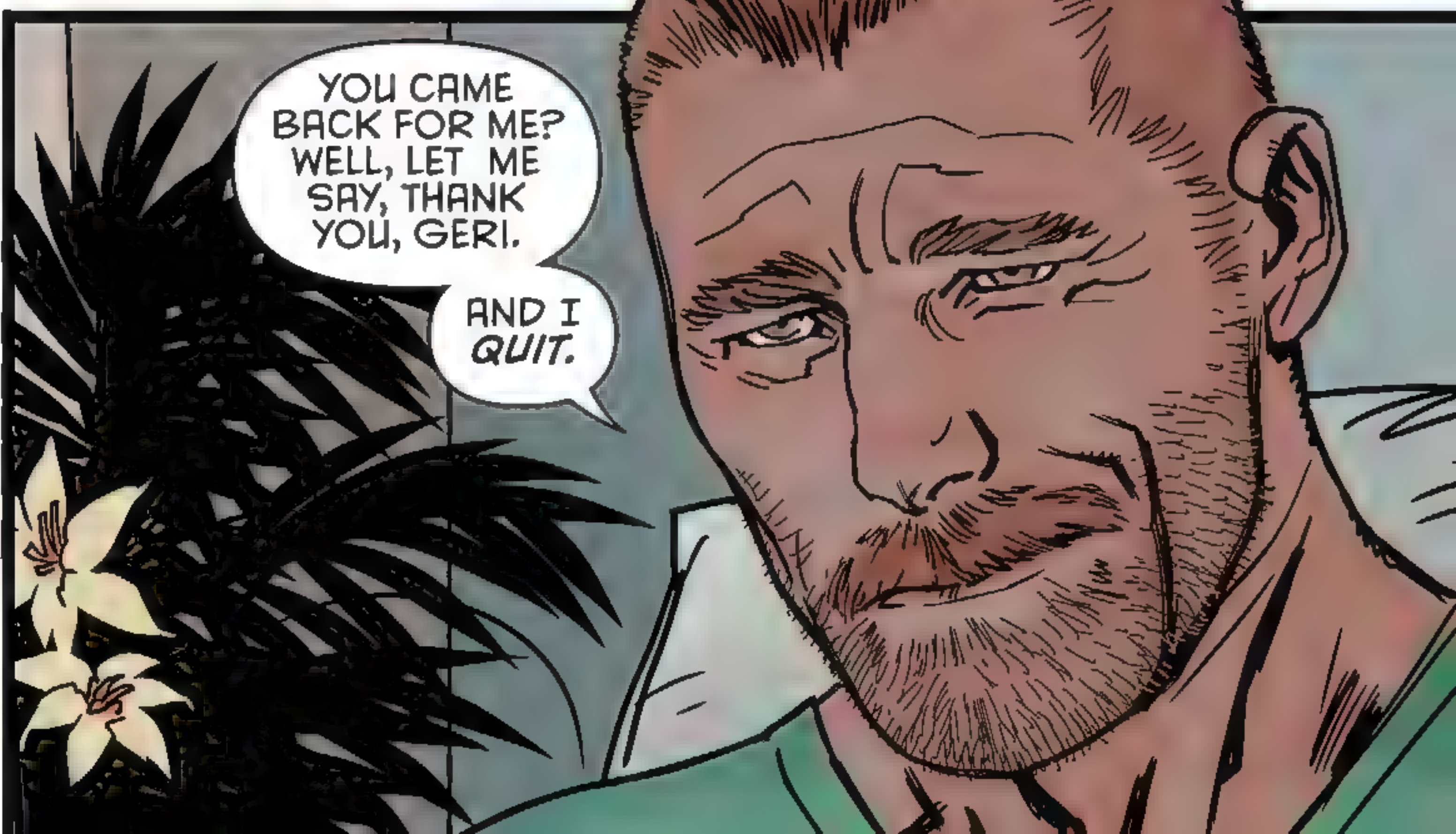
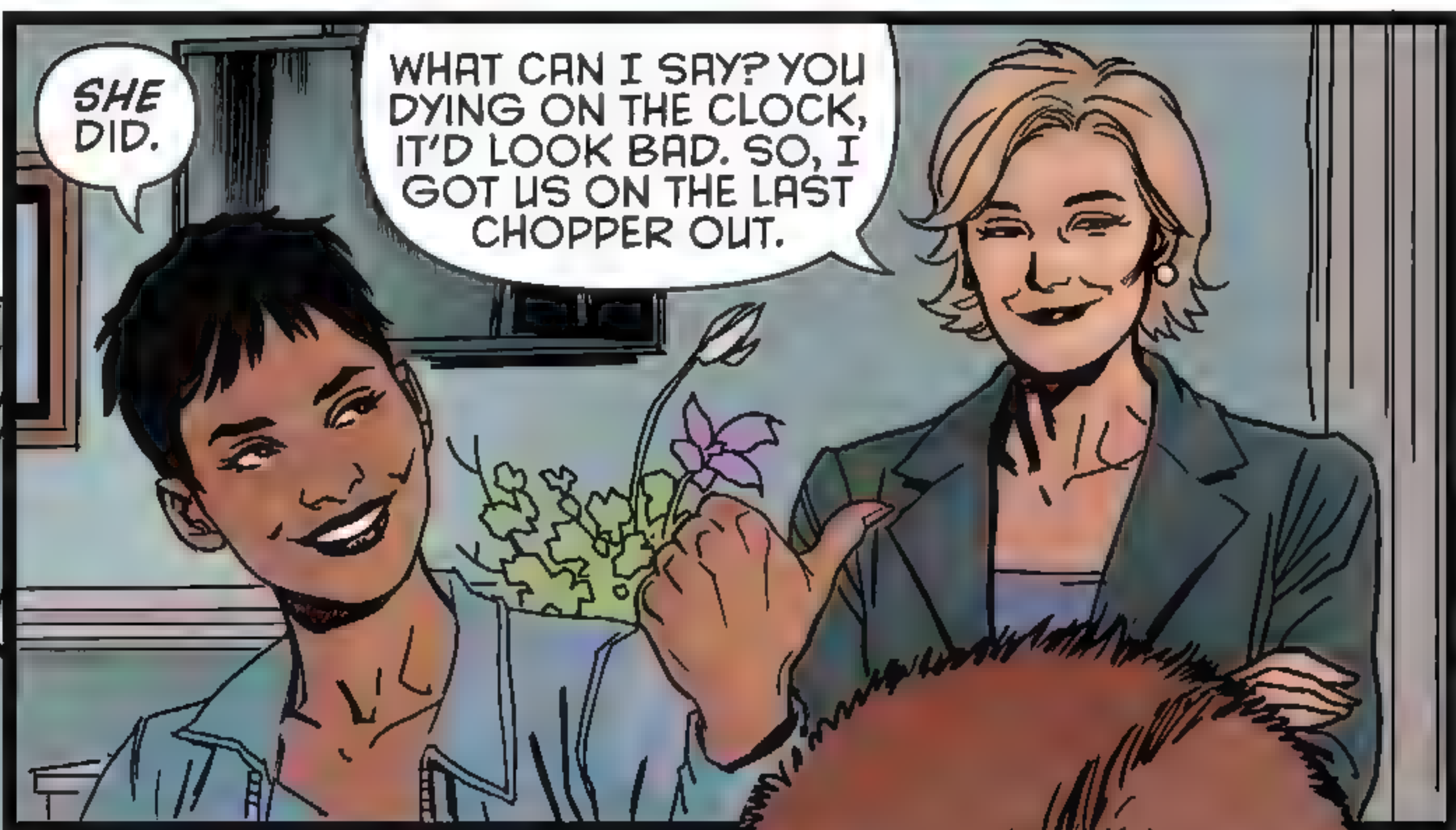
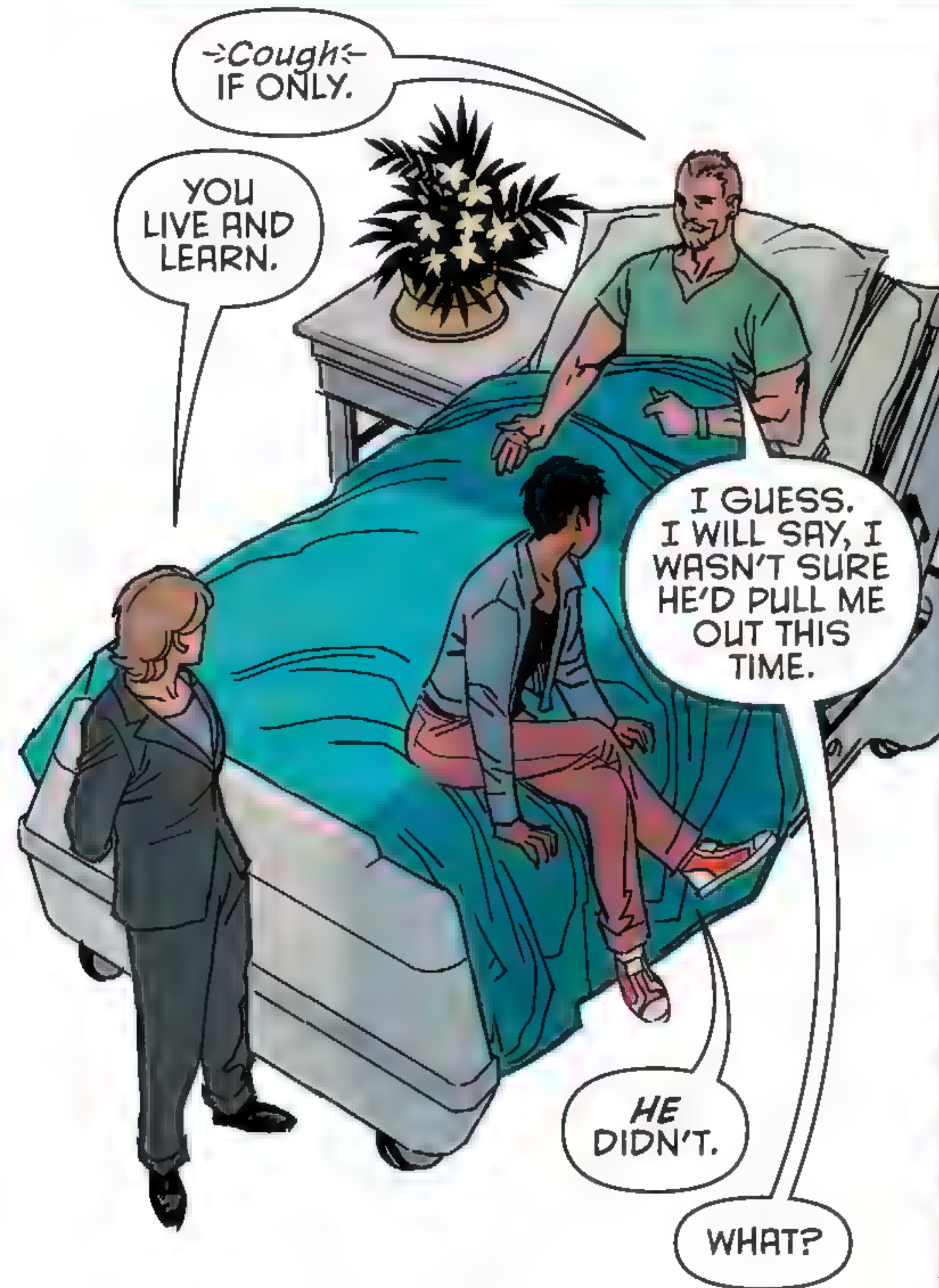
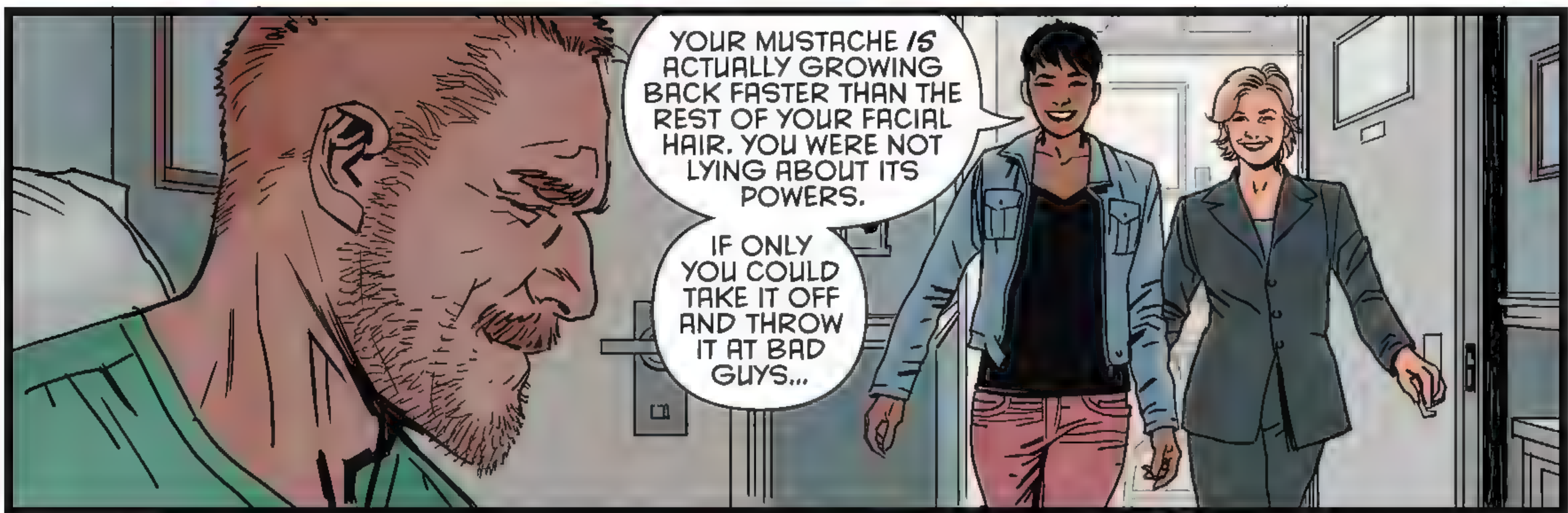
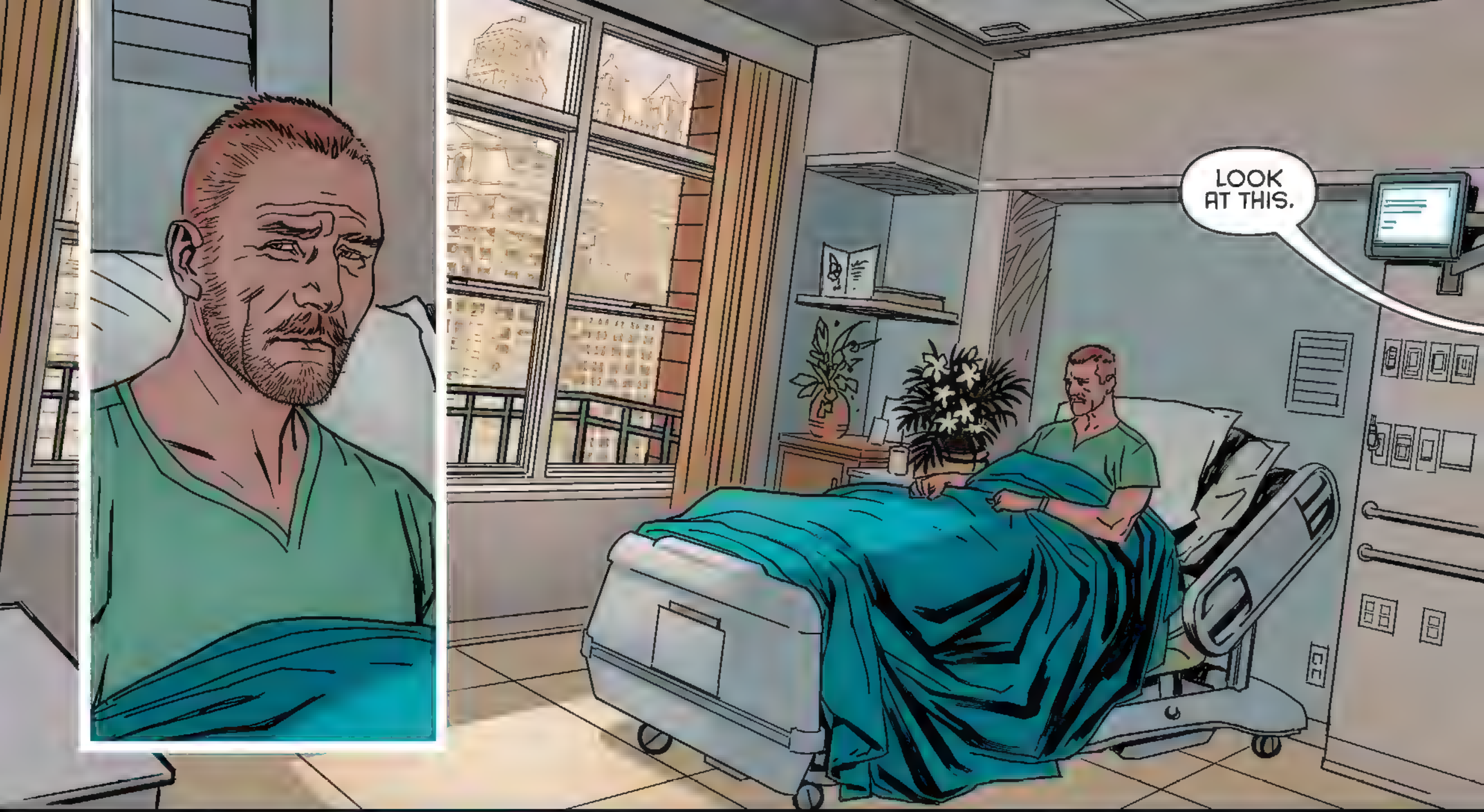
IT'S A SPECIAL
THING, THE WAY
IT HITS YOU.

I REMEMBER THE
FIRST TIME I TOOK
THE TRAIN INTO THE
CITY. HOW IT FELT.
HOW I CAME OUT
OF THE MIDTOWN
TUNNEL AND...

WHAM!

THE SIZE OF THE PLACE IS
THE THING. THE WAY THE CITY
TOWERS OVER YOU, LIKE A
CHALLENGE. LIKE I WAS
HERE BEFORE YOU. I'LL BE
HERE AFTER YOU.

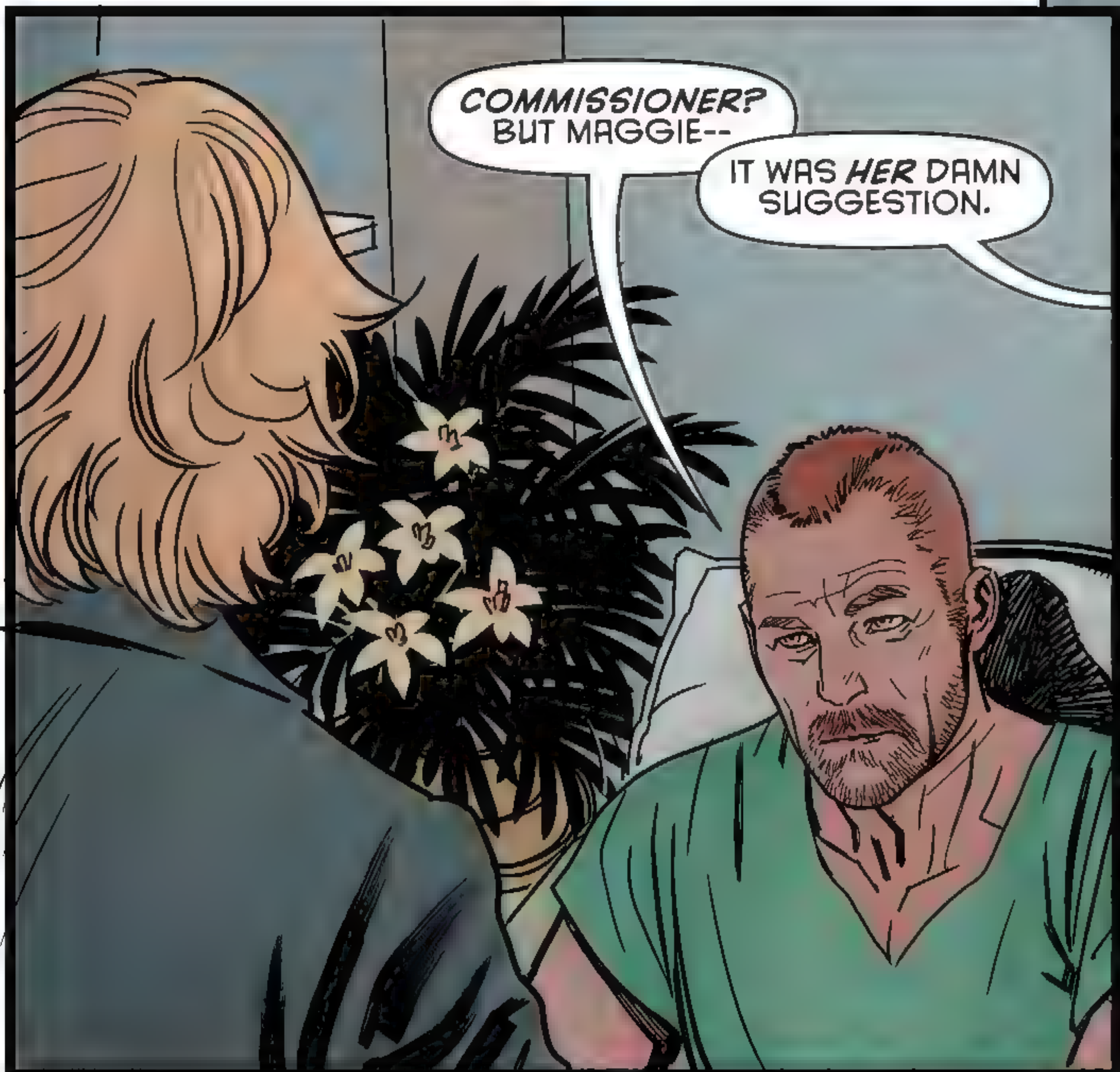
LIKE, WHO THE
HELL DO YOU
THINK YOU ARE?





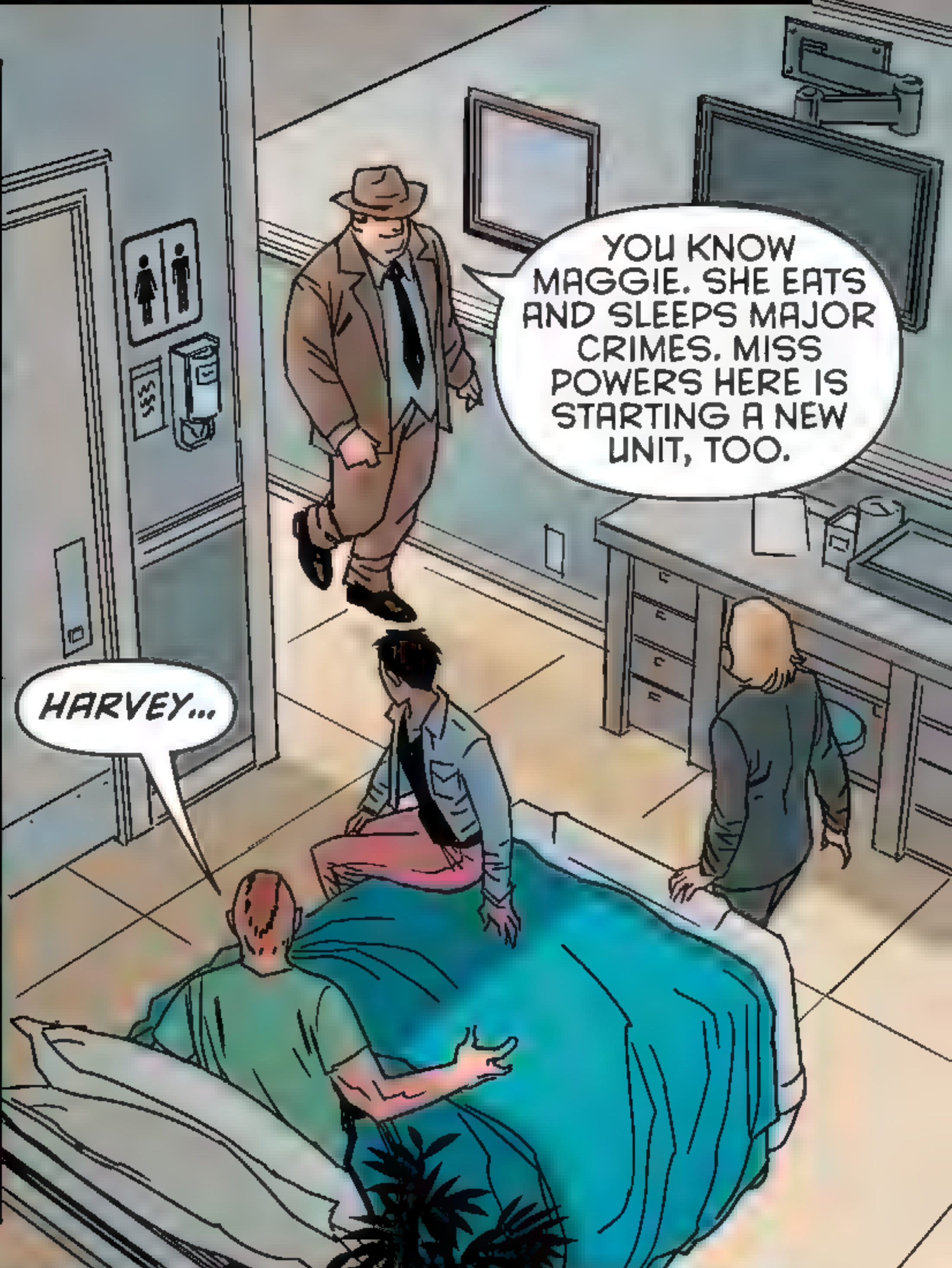
NO JOB TO QUIT, JIM. I'M SHUTTERING THE BATMAN PROGRAM. THE FACT IS, MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, YOU WERE RIGHT. *HEROES*, NOT SUPERHEROES, ARE WHAT THE CITY NEEDS RIGHT NOW.

SO, I'M GIVING THE MONEY I INVESTED IN THE PROGRAM TO CITY ORGANIZATIONS. AMONG THEM, THE *GOTHAM CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT*. TO BE HEADED BY COMMISSIONER JIM GORDON.



COMMISSIONER? BUT MAGGIE--

IT WAS *HER* DAMN SUGGESTION.



YOU KNOW MAGGIE. SHE EATS AND SLEEPS MAJOR CRIMES. MISS POWERS HERE IS STARTING A NEW UNIT, TOO.

HARVEY...



WHAT DO YOU SAY? I MEAN, I KNOW IT'S BEEN A WHILE.



CAN I HAVE A MOMENT?

OF COURSE, JIM. TAKE YOUR TIME.



WE HAVE WORK TO DO, JIM. YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT RIGHT NOW IS THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME, WHEN ALL THE WOUNDS ARE OPEN. WHEN THINGS ARE HURTING.

I KNOW.



AND...AND I JUST WANT TO SAY I'M *SORRY*, OLD FRIEND. I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL IT'S MY FAULT. TRYING TO BE YOU, TO TAKE YOUR PLACE...

...IT ALLOWED FOR BLOOM TO RISE UP AND BLOW THIS PLACE TO HELL ALL OVER AGAIN, JUST LIKE *JOKER* DID AND--

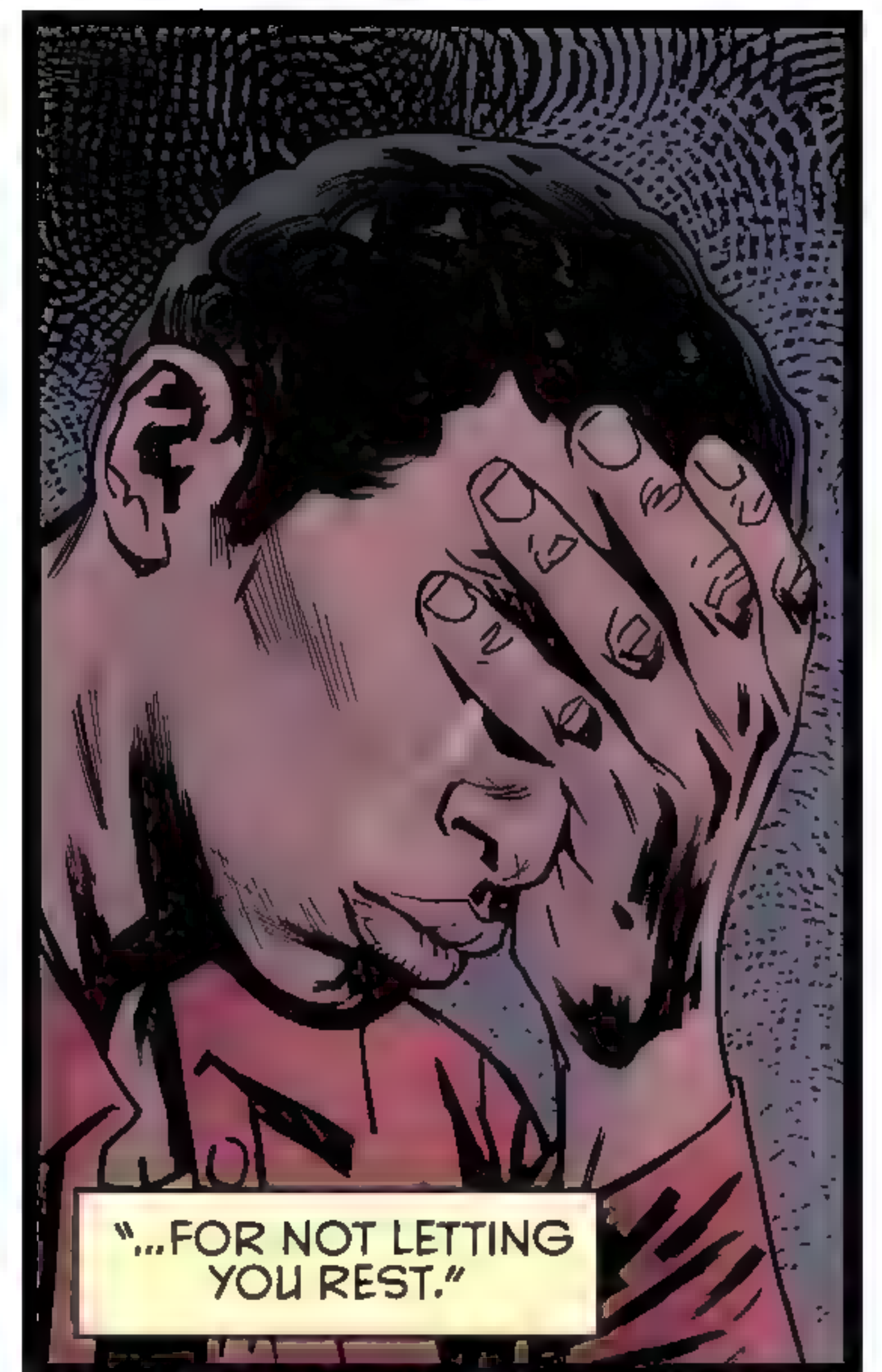
NO. NOT LIKE *JOKER*.

THE *JOKER*...THE DARKNESS IN HIM... NO ONE COULD BE HIM. BUT BLOOM, *ANYONE* CAN BECOME BLOOM IF THEY LOSE HOPE IN THIS PLACE.



WHAT I'M SAYING IS, HE WAS *YOUR* MONSTER, JIM, AND YOU STOPPED HIM, NOT ME. YOU AND THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY.

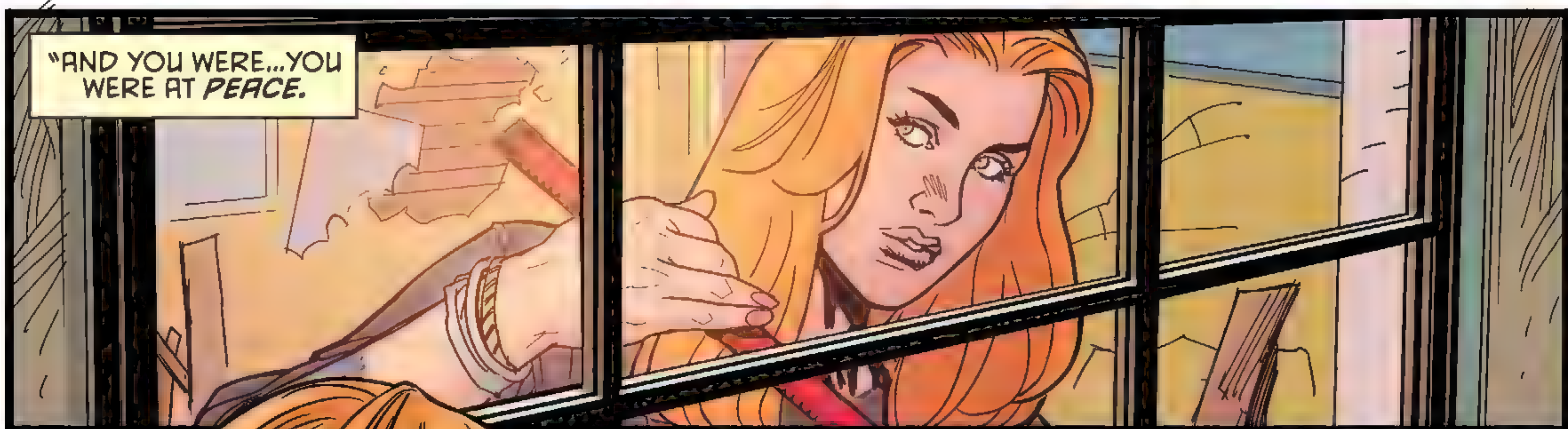
SO THANK YOU. FOR KEEPING THE CITY SAFE WHILE I WAS GONE.



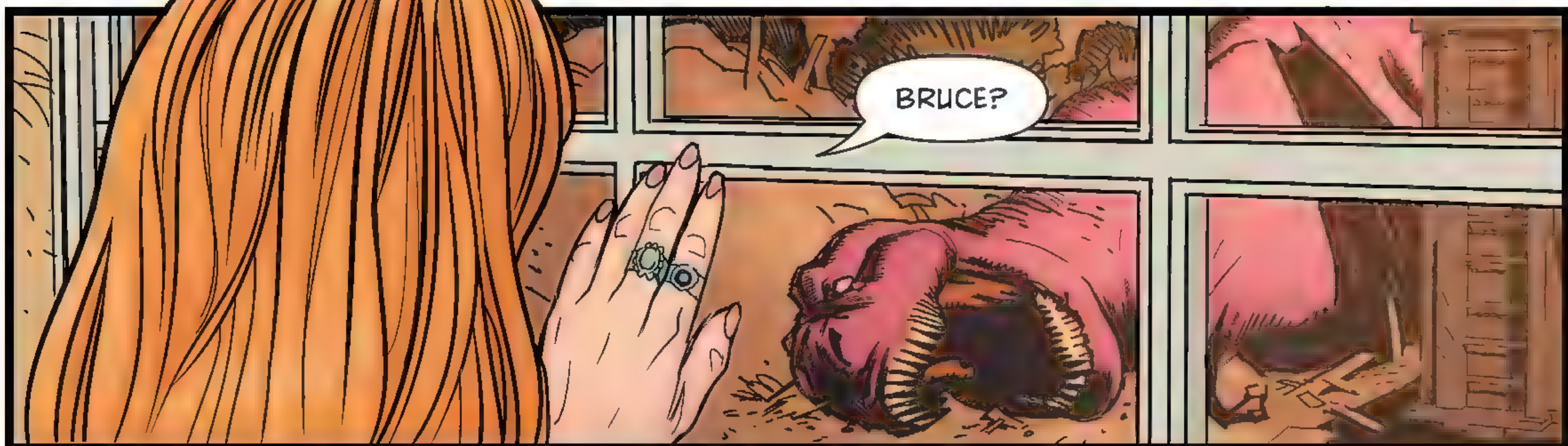
"BUT IS IT, REALLY? I MEAN, YOU WERE AT REST SOMEWHERE."



"AND YOU WERE...YOU WERE AT *PEACE*."



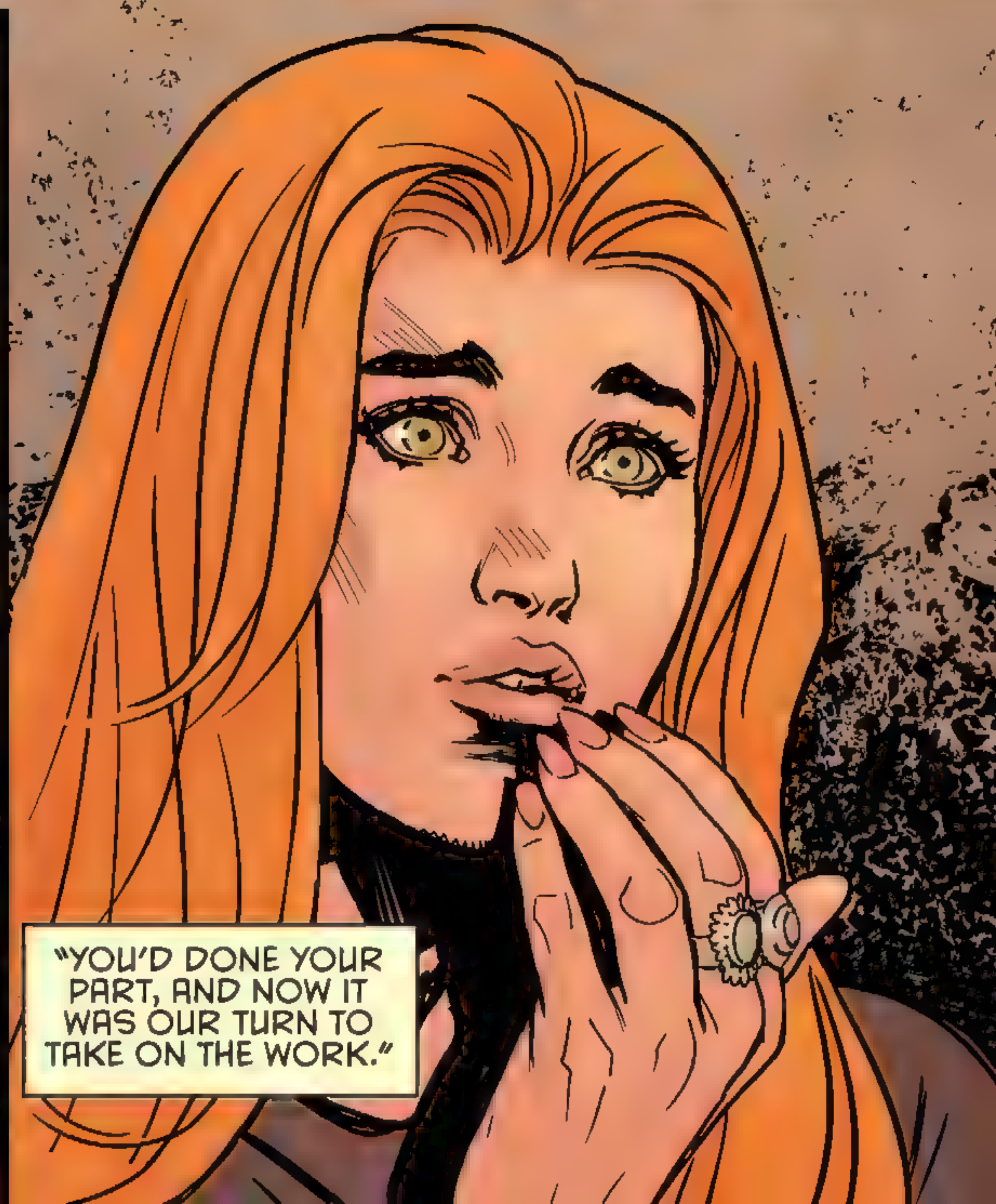
BRUCE?

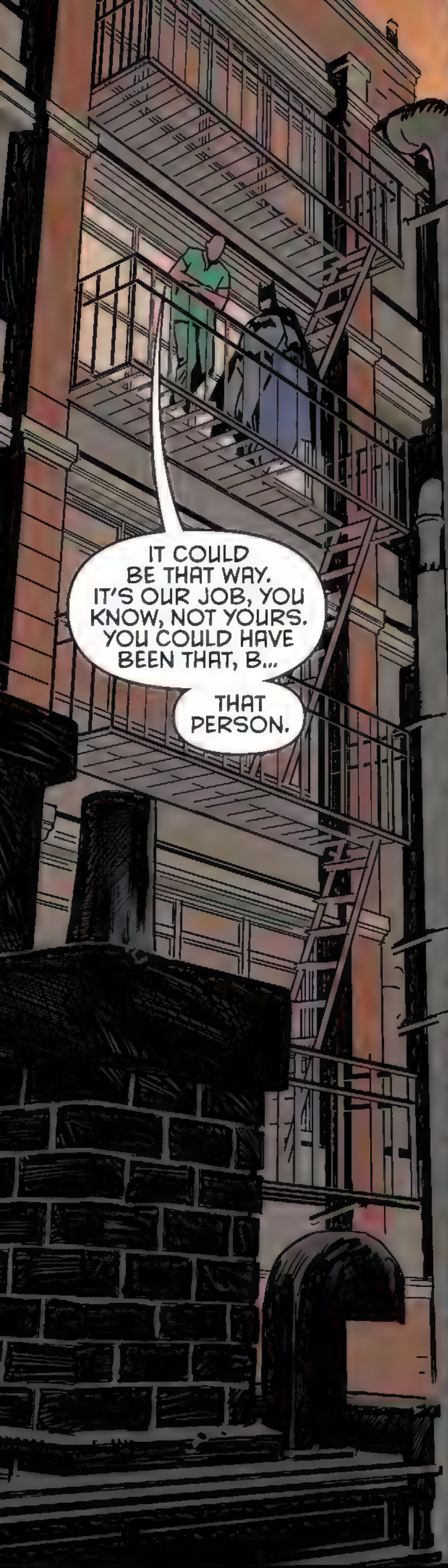


"I COULD FEEL IT. HELL, I'M SURE THE WHOLE CITY COULD FEEL IT."



"YOU'D DONE YOUR PART, AND NOW IT WAS OUR TURN TO TAKE ON THE WORK."



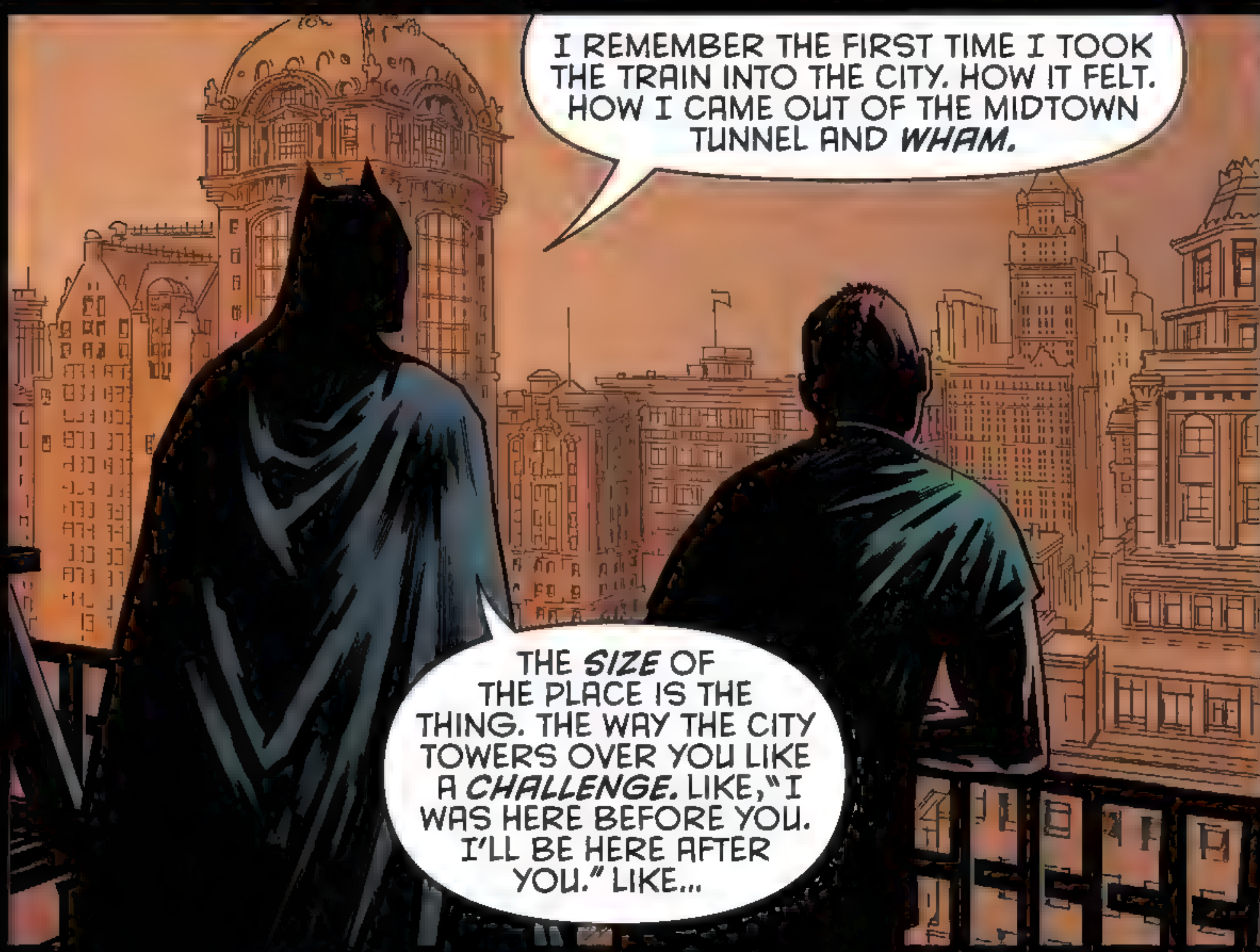


IT COULD BE THAT WAY. IT'S OUR JOB, YOU KNOW, NOT YOURS. YOU COULD HAVE BEEN THAT, B...

THAT PERSON.

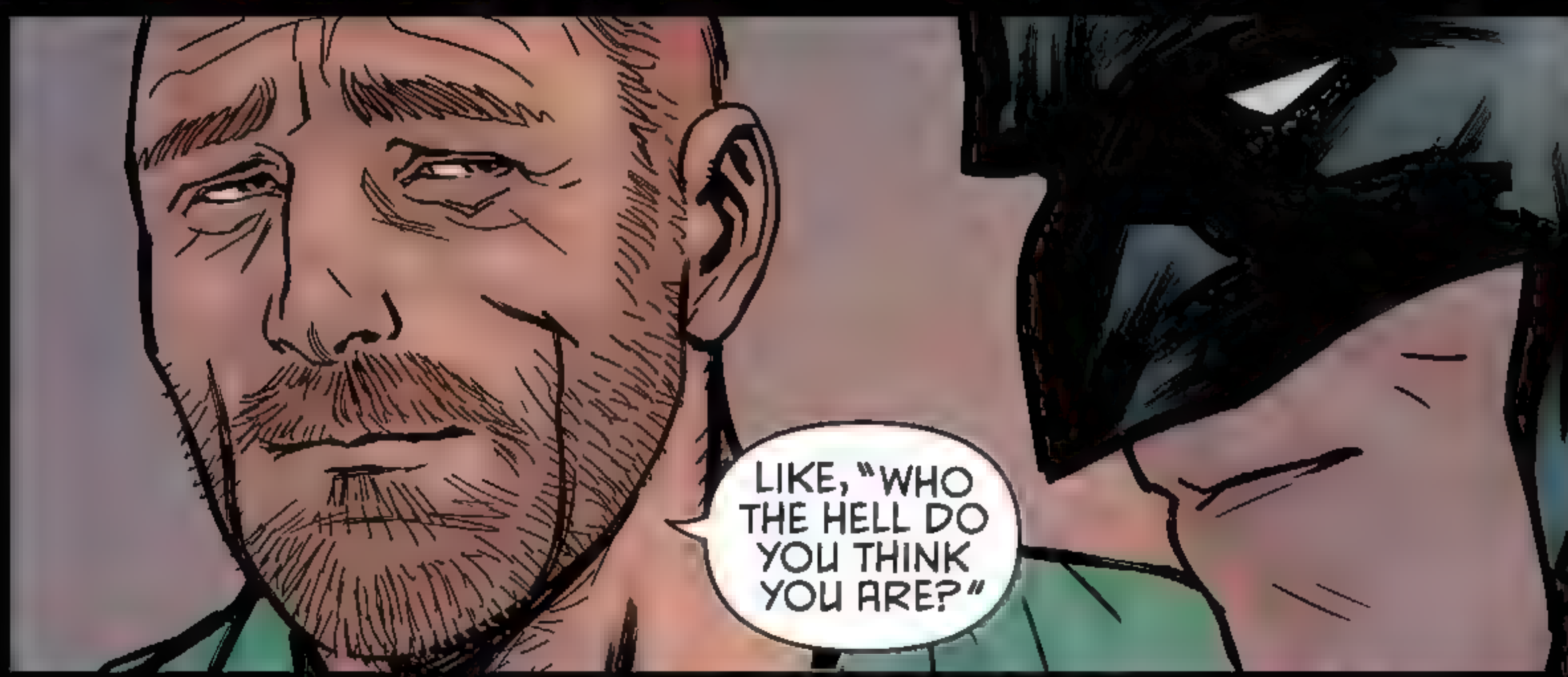


...
NO, YOU SAID IT YOURSELF. THAT MAN DIED A LONG TIME AGO.



I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I TOOK THE TRAIN INTO THE CITY. HOW IT FELT. HOW I CAME OUT OF THE MIDTOWN TUNNEL AND *WHAM*.

THE *SIZE* OF THE PLACE IS THE THING. THE WAY THE CITY TOWERS OVER YOU LIKE A *CHALLENGE*. LIKE, "I WAS HERE BEFORE YOU. I'LL BE HERE AFTER YOU." LIKE...



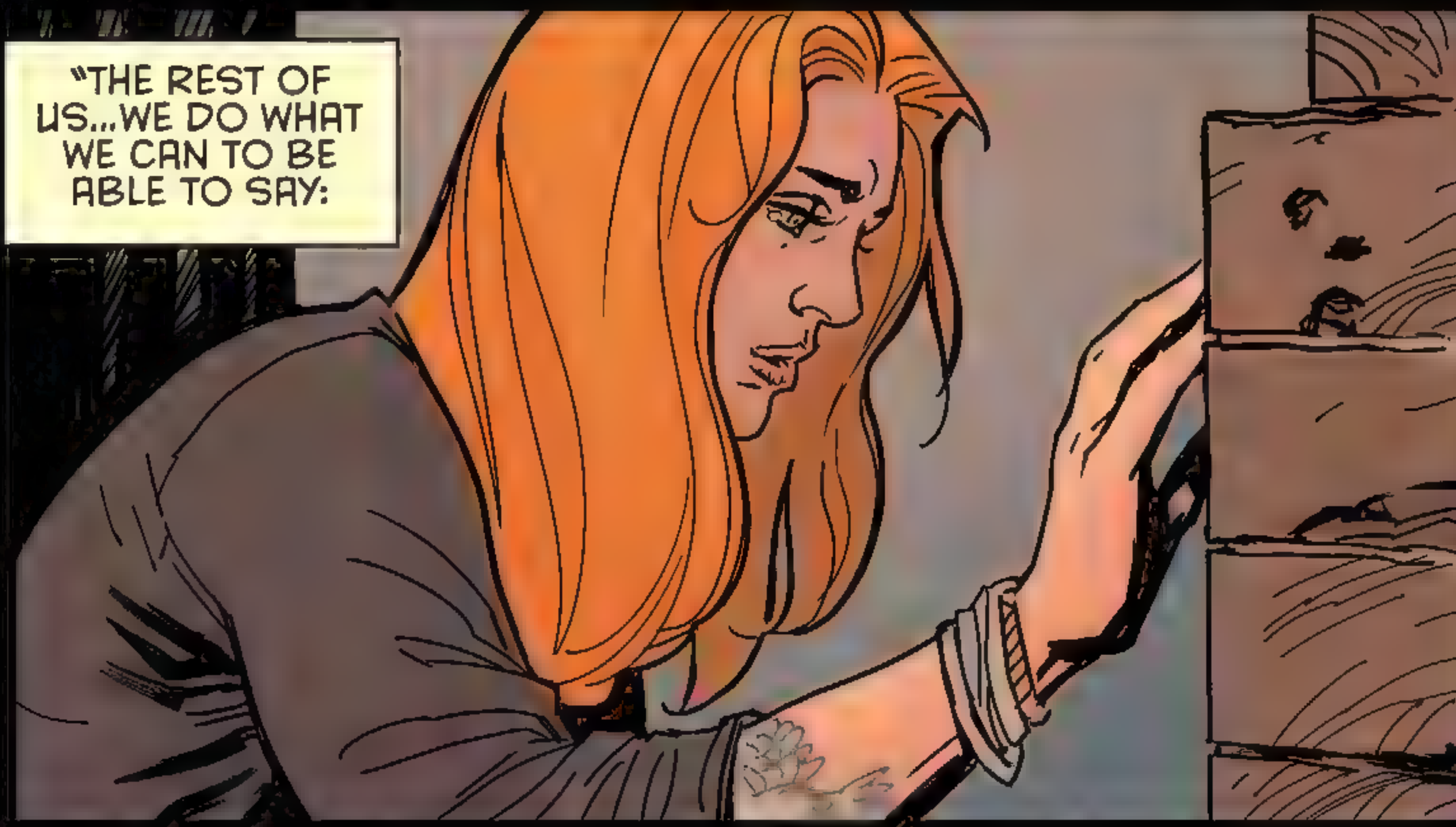
LIKE, "WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?"



THAT'S EASY, THOUGH.



"YOU'RE
BATMAN."



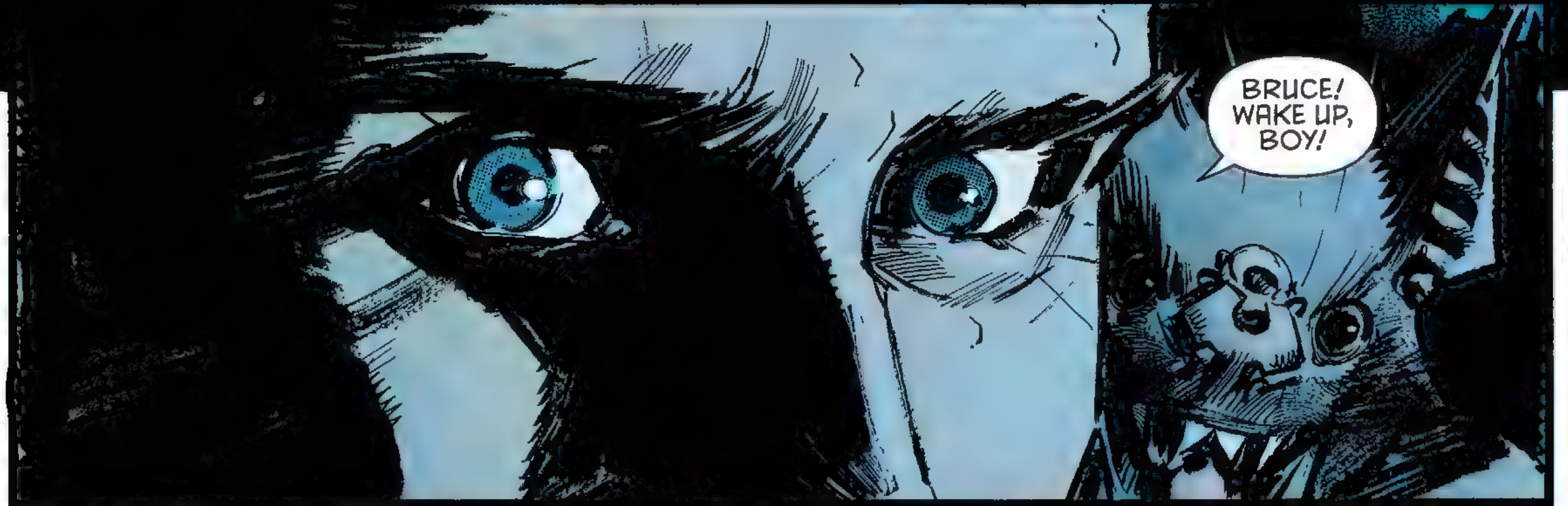
"THE REST OF
US...WE DO WHAT
WE CAN TO BE
ABLE TO SAY:



"I WAS
HERE."





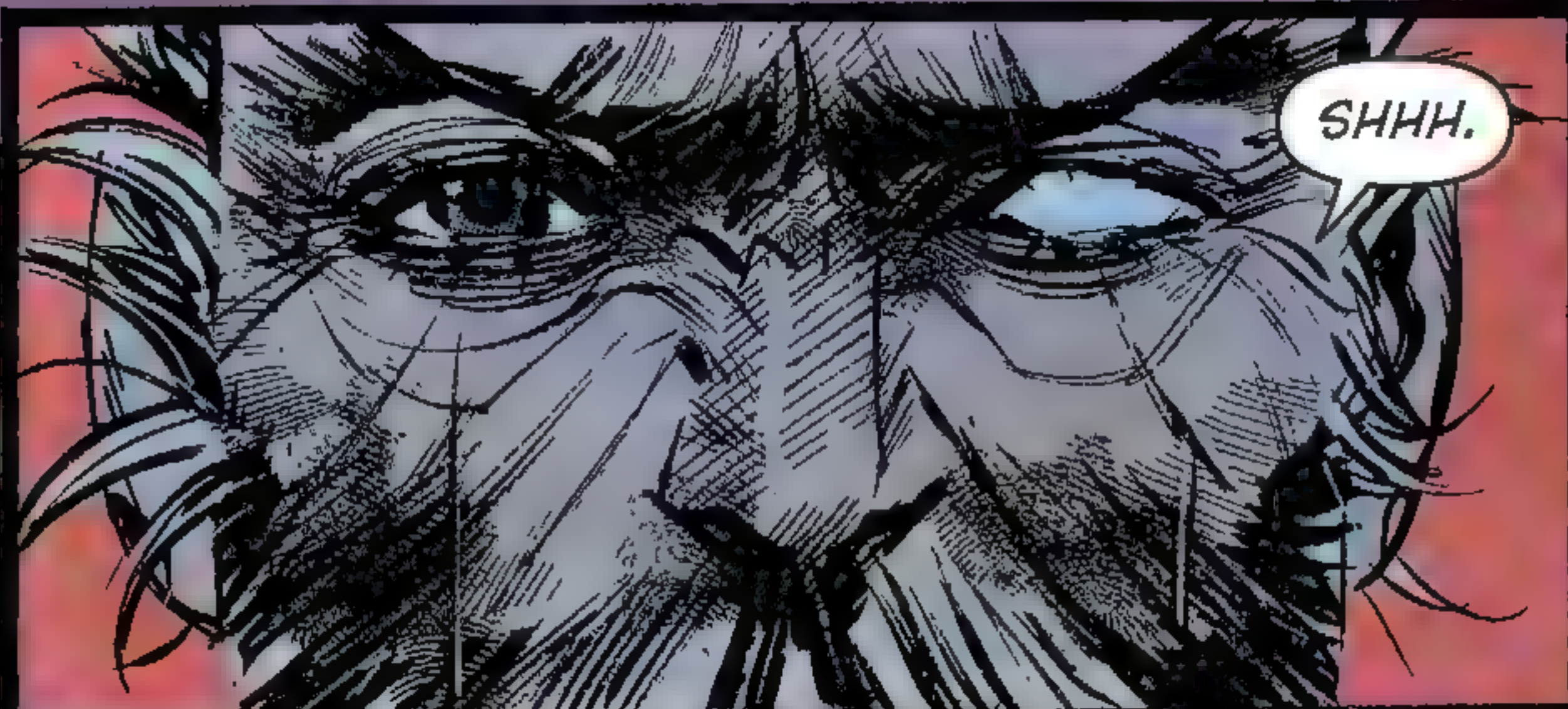


YES,
FATHER...

...I SHALL
BECOME
A *BAT*.

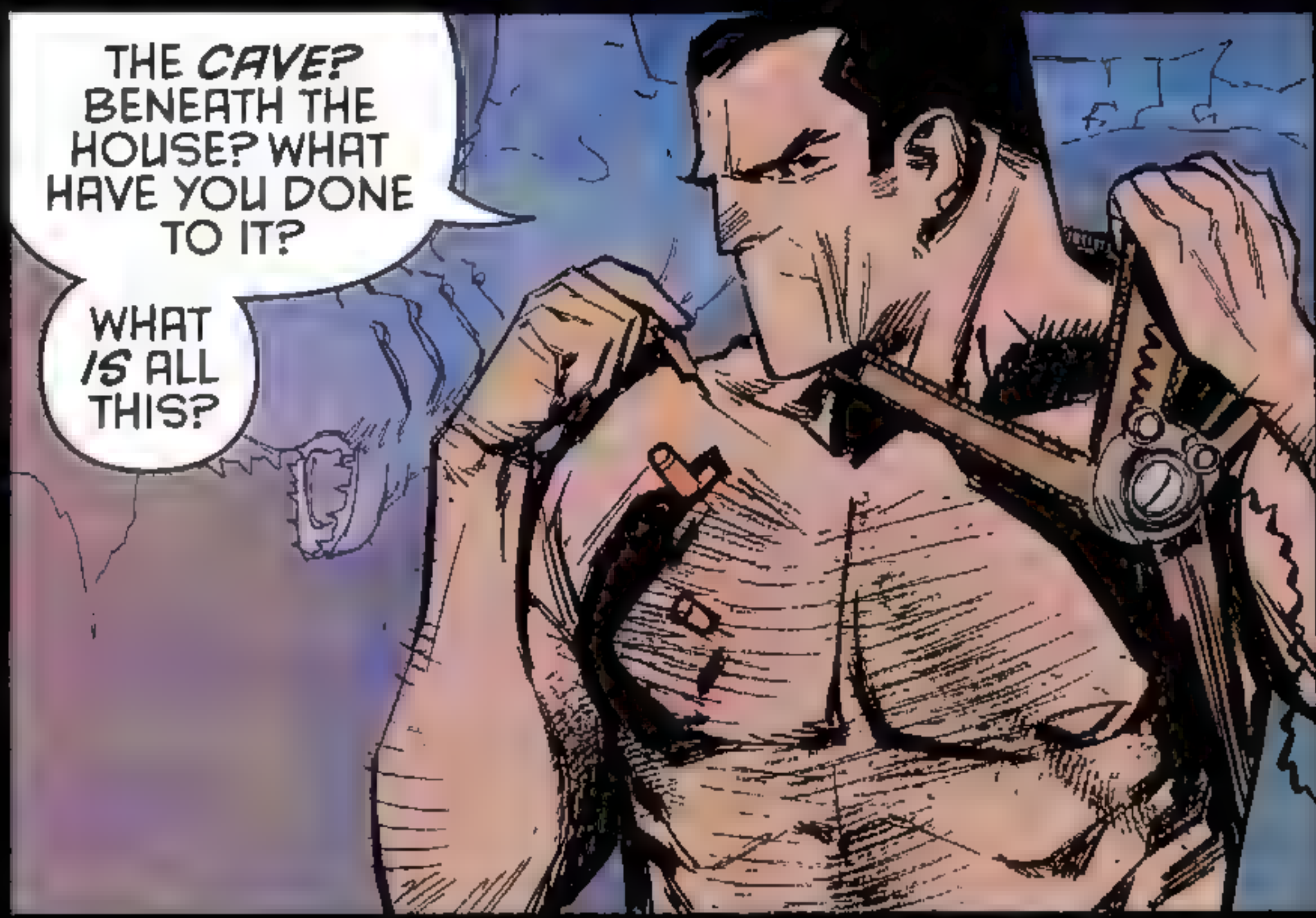
BRUCE!

BRUCE!
WAKE UP,
BOY!



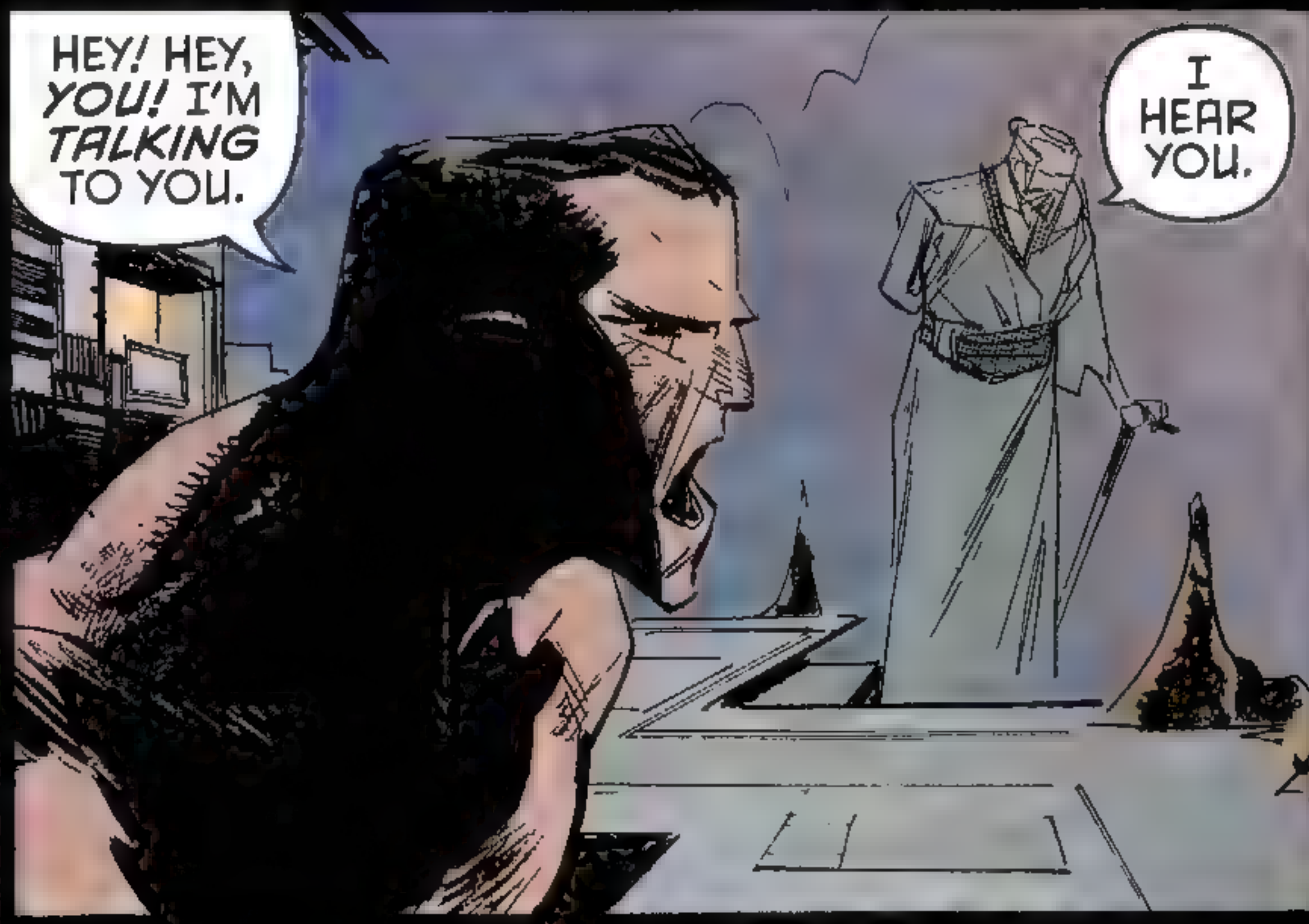
TWENTY-SEVEN

SCOTT SNYDER writer
SEAN MURPHY artist
MATT HOLLINGSWORTH colors
STEVE WANDS letters



THE CAVE?
BENEATH THE
HOUSE? WHAT
HAVE YOU DONE
TO IT?

WHAT
IS ALL
THIS?



HEY! HEY,
YOU! I'M
TALKING
TO YOU.

I
HEAR
YOU.

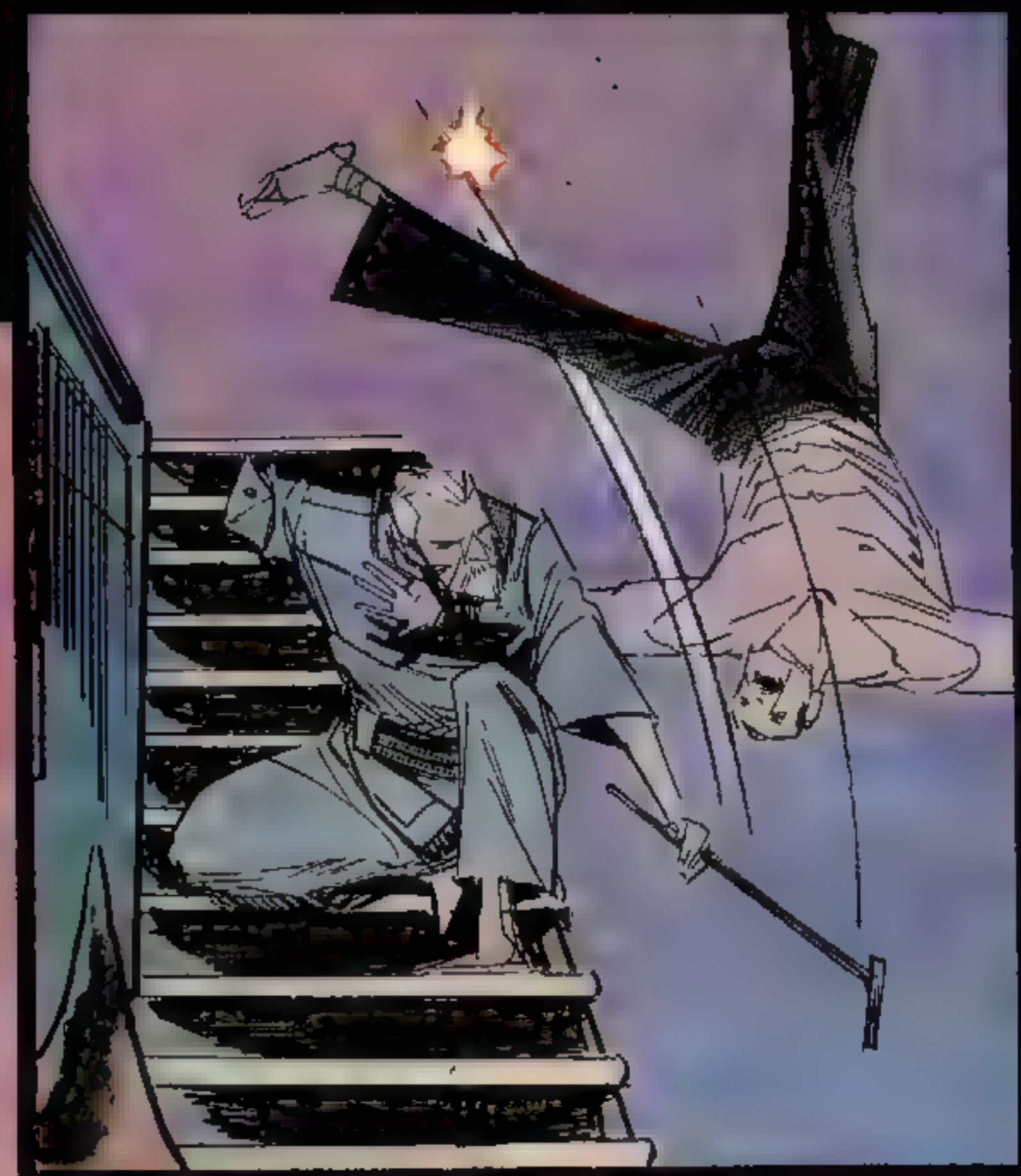


WELL THEN, HOW
ABOUT YOU START
TALKING, #\$\$\$%!

STARTING
WITH WHO THE
HELL YOU
ARE!



ANSWER
ME WHEN I'M
TALKING TO
YOU! WHO
ARE YOU?!



I'M YOU,
BOY.

I'M YOU. AND
YOU'RE ME. AND
WE'RE BOTH
BATMAN.

...BATMAN?
BUT--

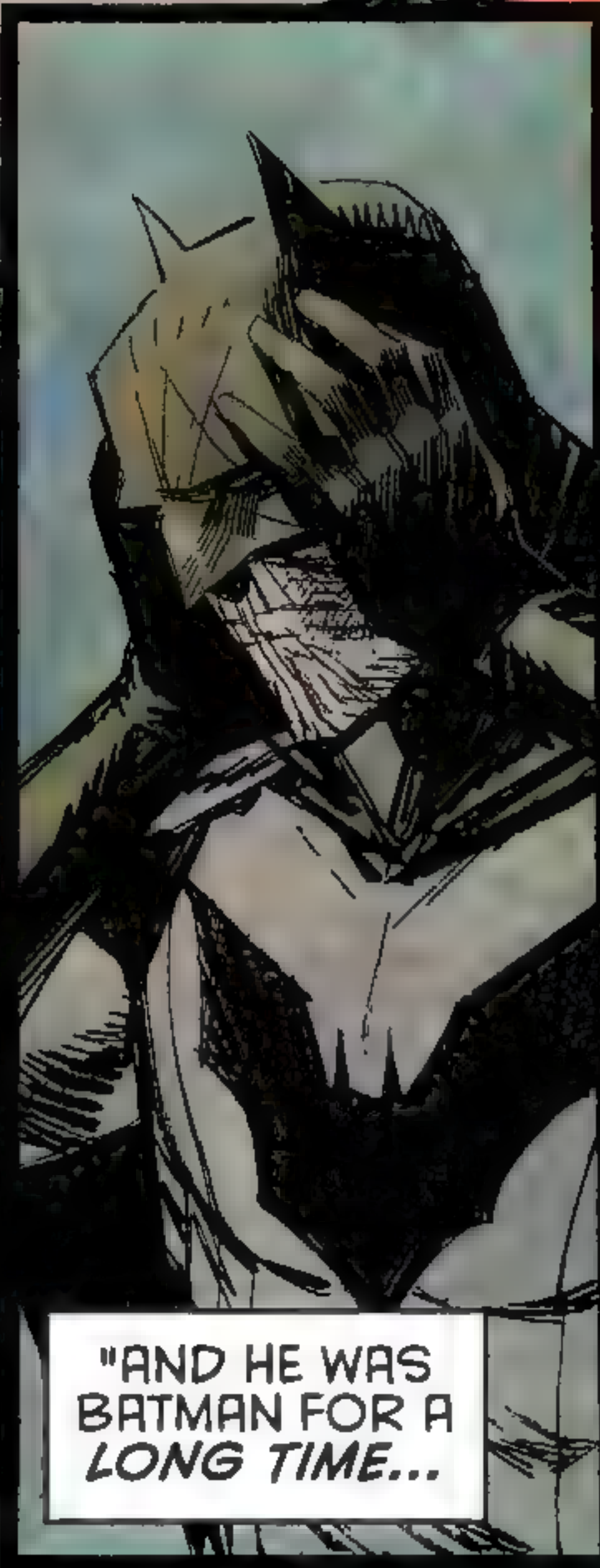
THE IDEA ONLY
JUST CAME TO YOU?
HEH. NO, SEE, THE
IDEA ACTUALLY CAME
TO YOU, AND ME, AND
HIM, MANY YEARS
AGO.



"HIM?"

"HIM. THE
FIRST OF US.

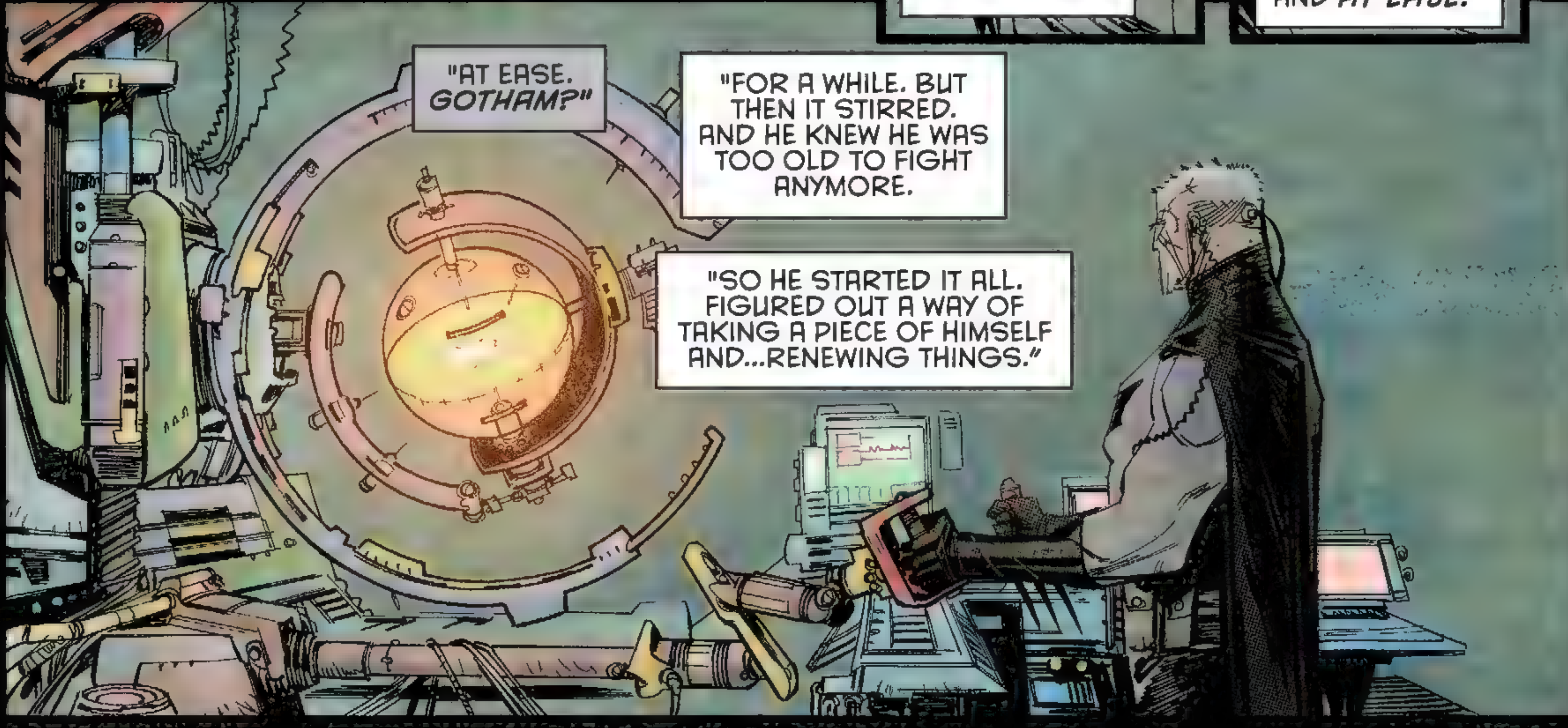
"THE IDEA CAME TO HIM,
JUST AS IT DID TO YOU
AND ME, AND HE WAS
THE *FIRST* BATMAN.



"AND HE WAS
BATMAN FOR A
LONG TIME...



"...UNTIL HE WAS
OLD AND
TIRED, AND THE
CITY WAS QUIET
AND *AT EASE*."



"AT EASE.
*GO*THAM?"

"FOR A WHILE. BUT
THEN IT STIRRED.
AND HE KNEW HE WAS
TOO OLD TO FIGHT
ANYMORE.

"SO HE STARTED IT ALL.
FIGURED OUT A WAY OF
TAKING A PIECE OF HIMSELF
AND...RENEWING THINGS."



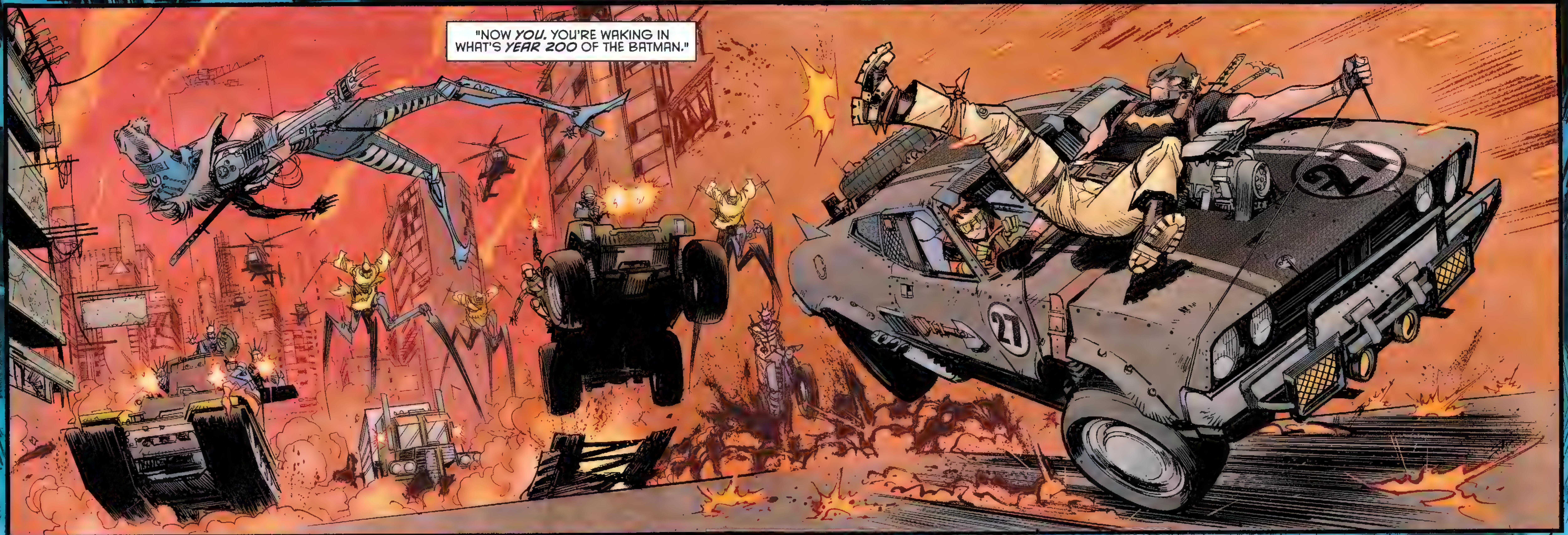
"SINCE THEN, THERE
HAVE BEEN ALMOST **TEN**
GENERATIONS OF US.

"THERE HAVE BEEN
MANY THREATS...



"...BUT THERE'S ALSO
ALWAYS BEEN A **BATMAN**
TO *FIGHT* THEM."

"NOW *YOU*. YOU'RE WAKING IN
WHAT'S *YEAR 200* OF THE BATMAN."

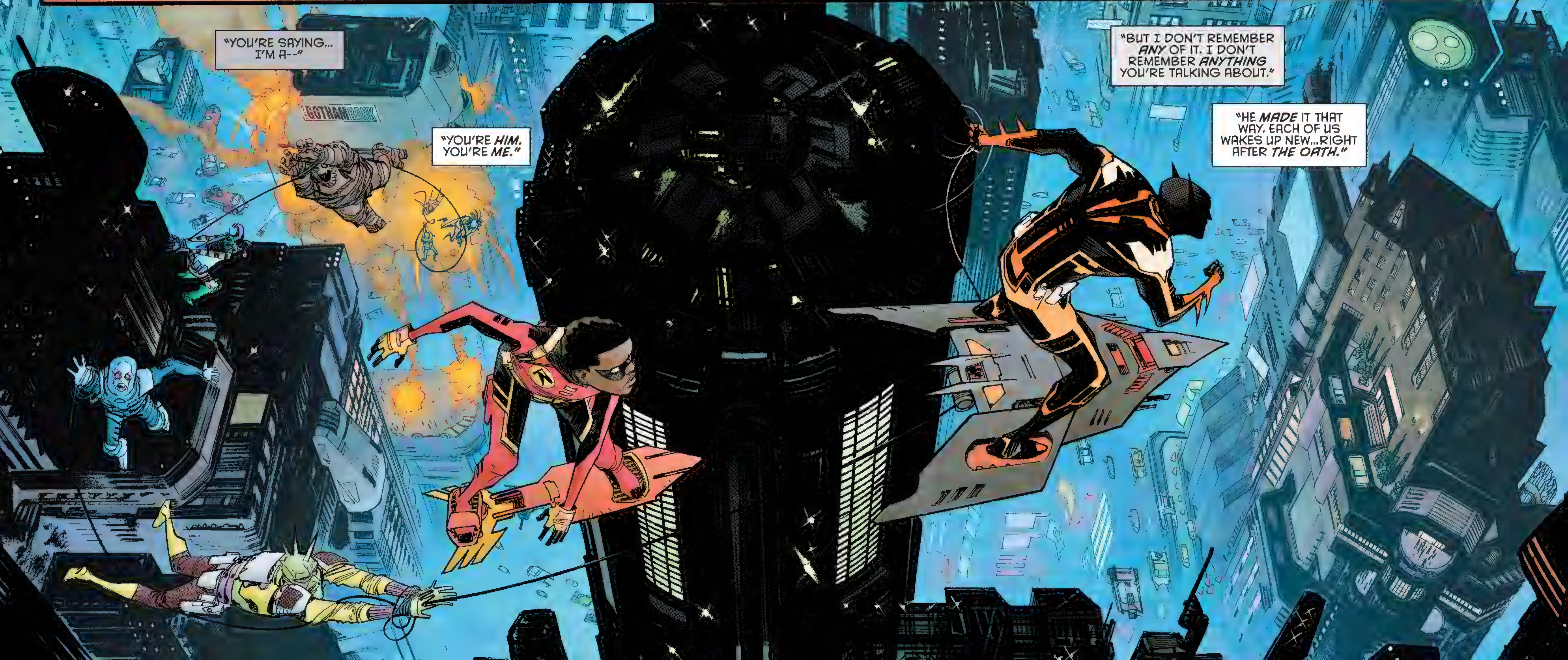


"YOU'RE SAYING...
I'M A--"

"YOU'RE HIM.
YOU'RE ME."

"BUT I DON'T REMEMBER
ANY OF IT. I DON'T
REMEMBER *ANYTHING*
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT."

"HE *MADE* IT THAT WAY. EACH OF US WAKES UP NEW...RIGHT AFTER *THE OATH*."





HE FIGURED THAT EACH OF US HAS ABOUT **TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS** OF EFFECTIVENESS. SO AT YEAR TWENTY-FIVE, IF THE CITY IS STILL STIRRING, WE START THE PROGRAM, AS IT TAKES TWO YEARS TO ACTUALIZE.

THAT'S WHAT I DID. IN THE TWO YEARS SINCE, THOUGH, THE CITY HAS BECOME QUIET. **PEACEFUL.**

I'LL BE HERE LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE SURE YOUR NERVES TAKE. THEN I'LL DIE. AND WHEN I DO, YOU'LL **BURN** EVERYTHING IN THIS CAVE IN THE FURNACE BELOW. ALL OF IT.

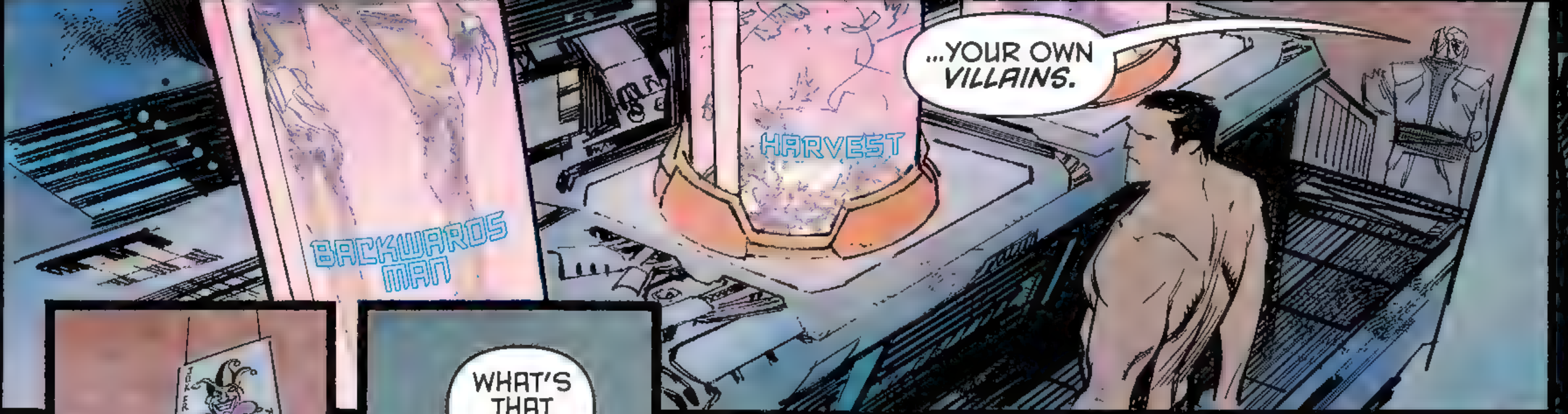
WHY WOULD I DO THAT?

THERE'S RECORD OF IT, ALL OF IT, IN **ALFRED.**

BUT THE TRUTH IS...



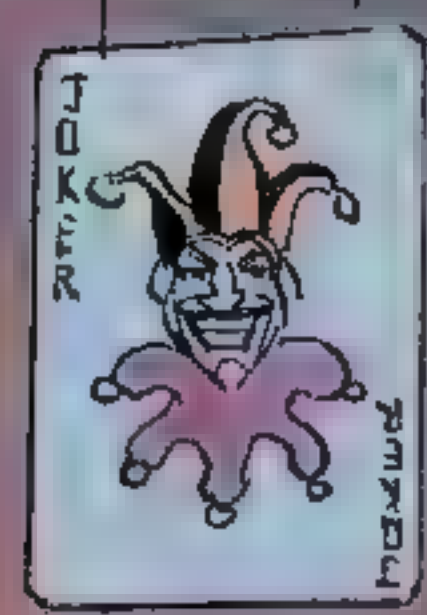
...YOU'LL NEED TO MAKE ROOM FOR YOUR **OWN THINGS**, IF YOU STAY. BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR **OWN ALLIES...**



...YOUR **OWN VILLAINS.**

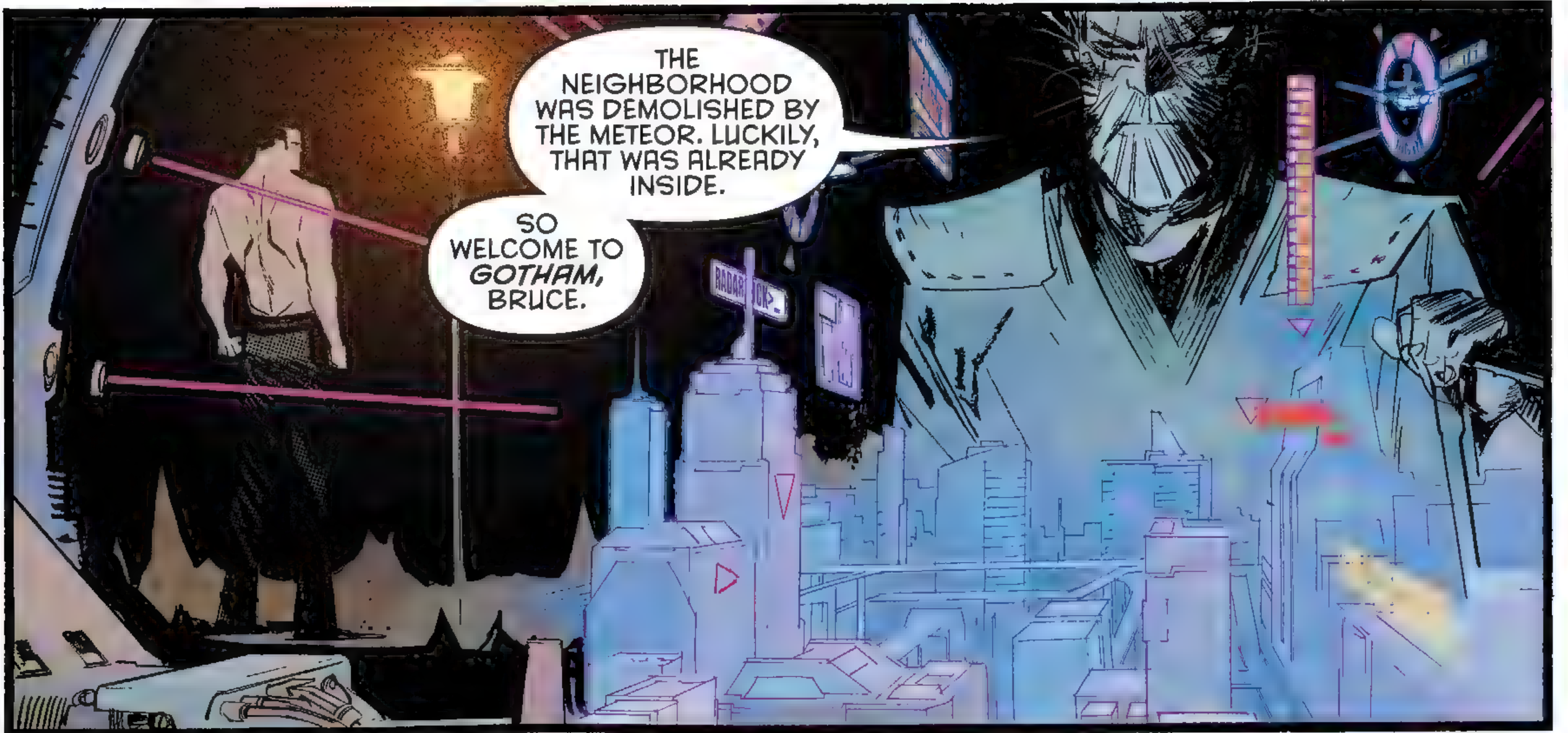


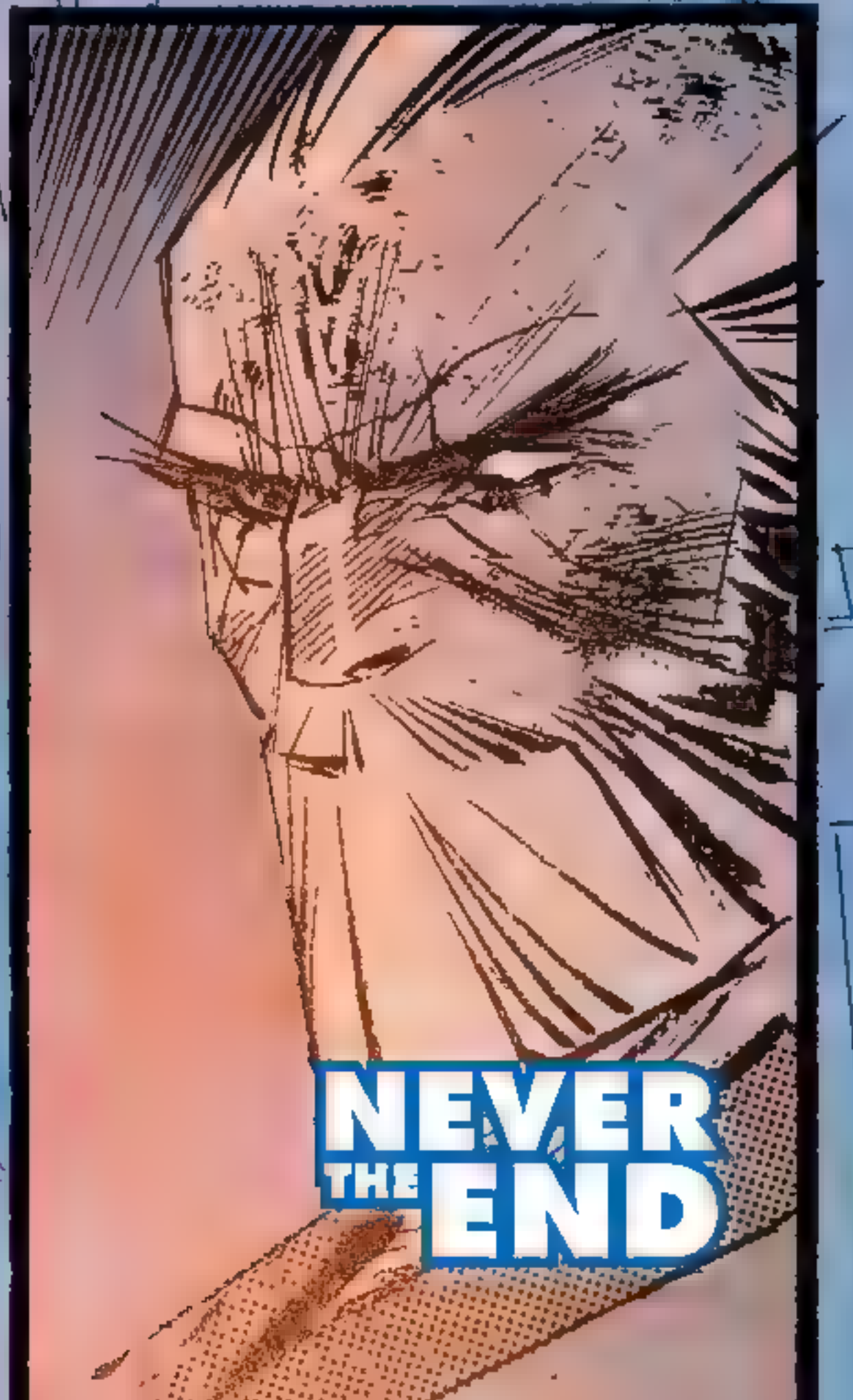
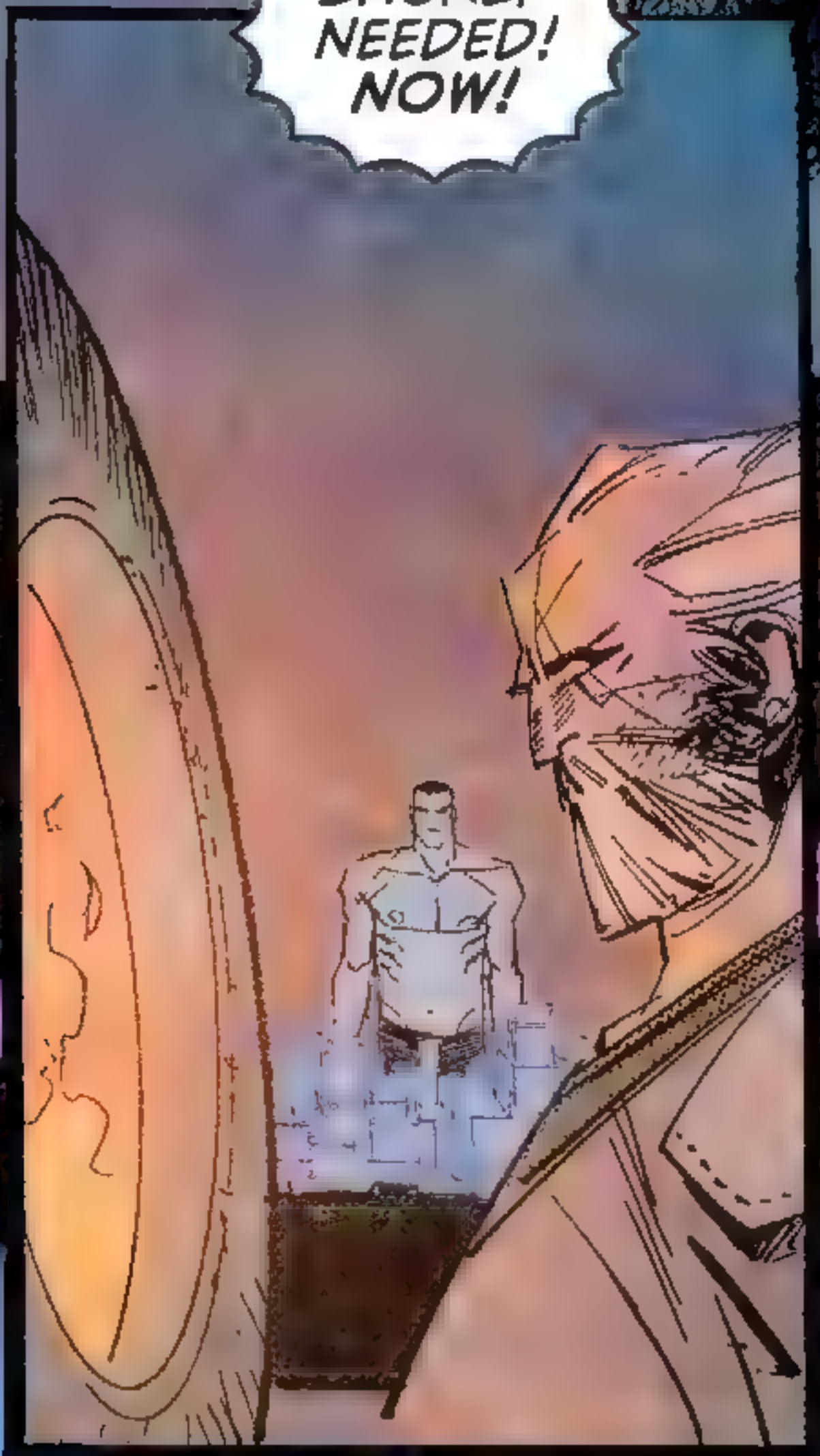
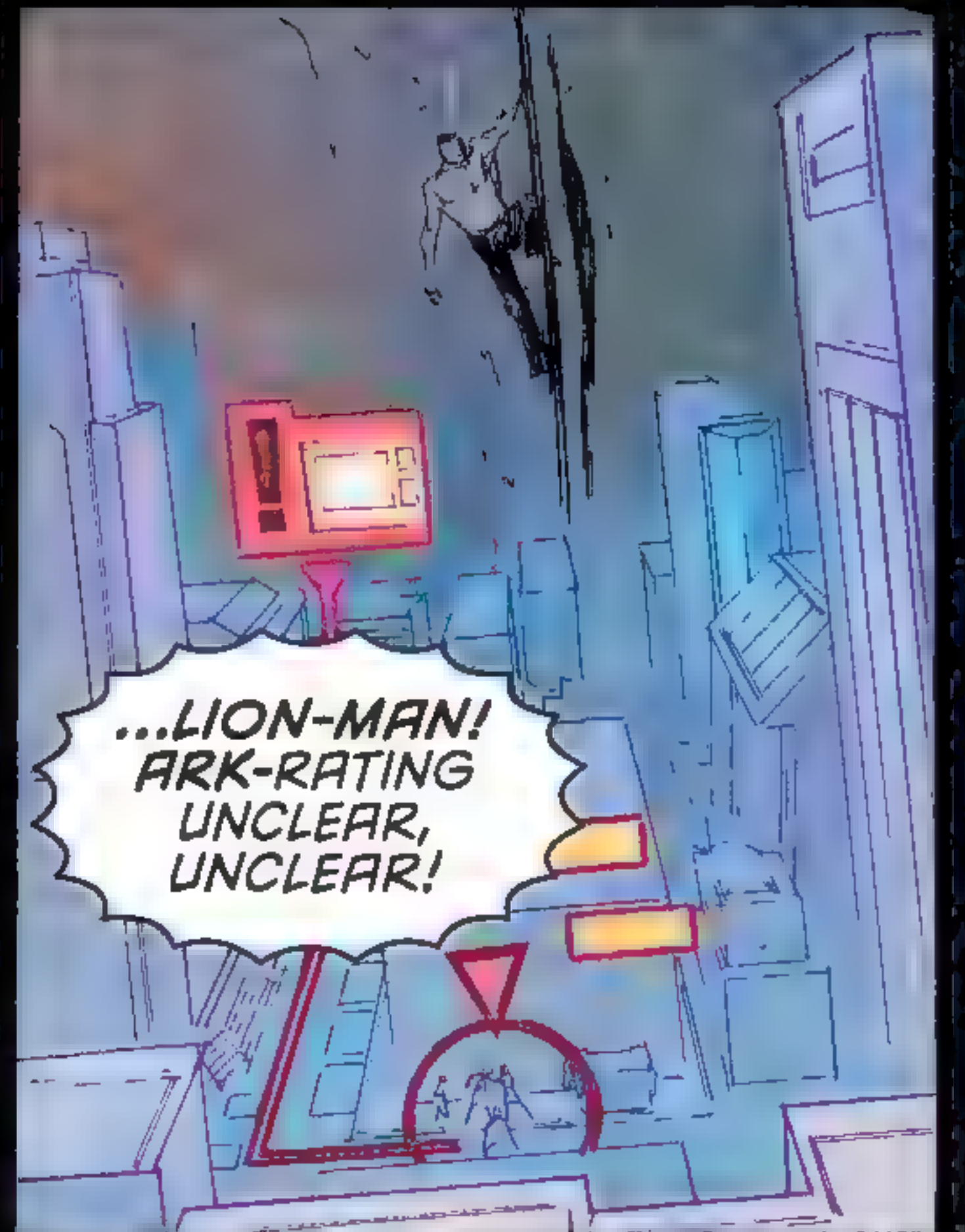
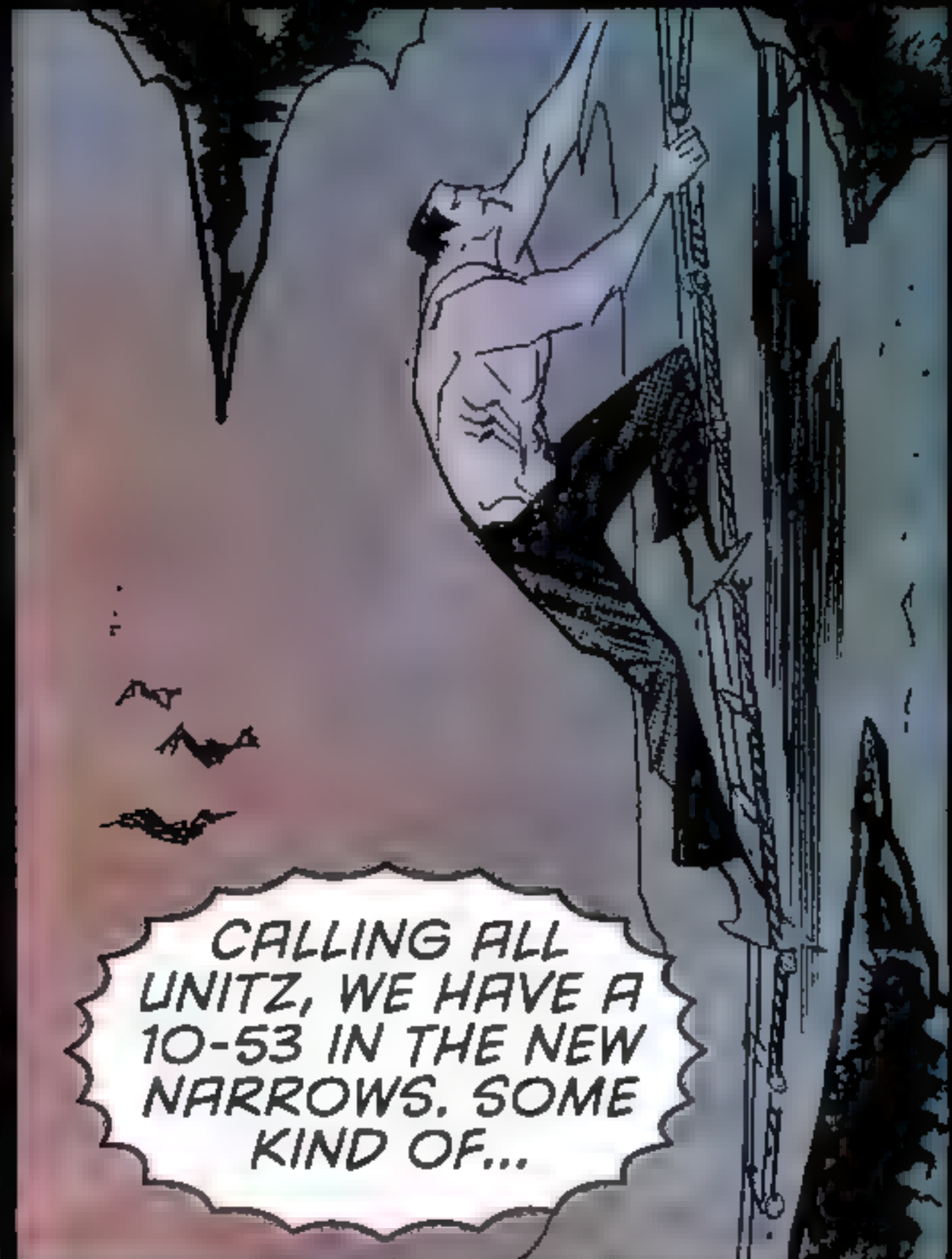
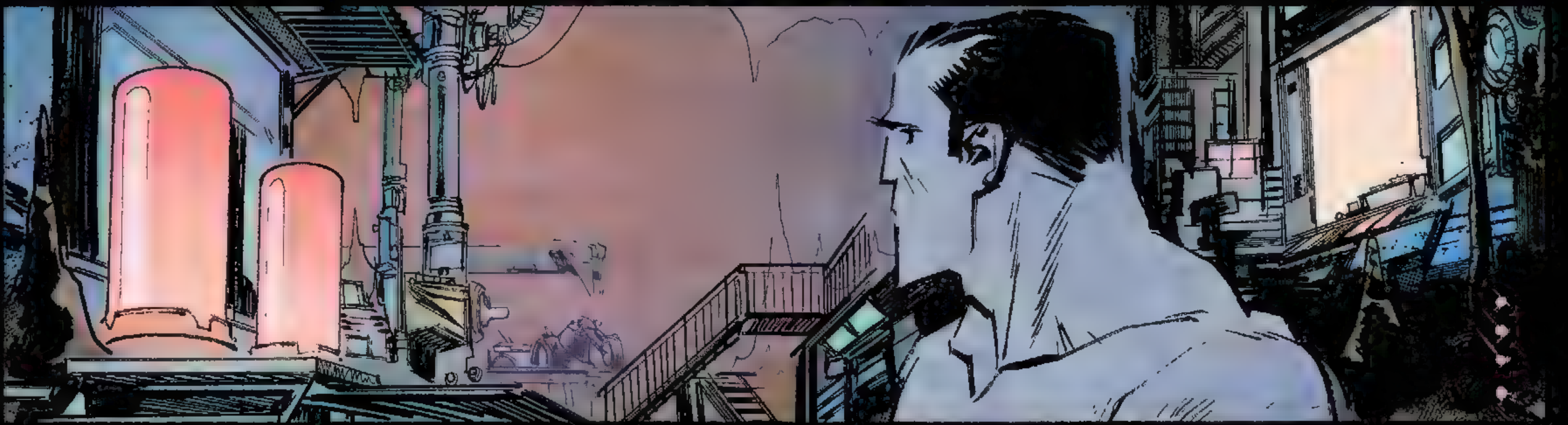
WHAT'S THAT ONE?



YOU'LL FIND OUT. WE ALL DO.







NEVER
THE
END



VARIANT COVER GALLERY

BATMAN #46

LOONEY TUNES VARIANT BY
YANICK PAQUETTE WITH
NATHAN FAIRBAIRN & SPIKE BRANDT

BATMAN #47

HARLEY'S LITTLE BLACK BOOK VARIANT BY
ALEX ROSS

BATMAN #48

ADULT COLORING BOOK VARIANT BY
DAVE JOHNSON

BATMAN #49

VARIANT BY NEAL ADAMS,
WALTER SIMONSON
& LAURA MARTIN

BATMAN #50

BATMAN V SUPERMAN VARIANT BY
CHRIS DAUGHTRY,
JIM LEE & ALEX SINCLAIR

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY TERRY DODSON & RACHEL DODSON

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY ED BENES & TOMEU MOREY

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY NEAL ADAMS & JEROMY COX

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY LEE BERMEJO

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY TYLER KIRKHAM & TOMEU MOREY

VARIANT COVER GALLERY

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY GABRIELE DELL'OTTO

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY SEAN MURPHY & DAVE MCCAIG

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY JOSH MIDDLETON

BATMAN #50

BATMAN V SUPERMAN CONVENTION EXCLUSIVE
VARIANT BY DAVID FINCH,
MATT BANNING & JUNE CHUNG

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY GUILLEM MARCH

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY DAVE JOHNSON & DAVE MCCAIG

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY PATRICK GLEASON,
MICK GRAY & JOHN KALISZ

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY TIM SALE & BRENNAN WAGNER

BATMAN #50/SUPERMAN #50

CONNECTING *BATMAN V SUPERMAN* VARIANTS
BY AMANDA CONNER & PAUL MOUNTS

BATMAN #50

BATMAN V SUPERMAN VARIANT BY PAUL POPE













DAUGHTRY '16
SMILE
SINC'







B=H=5
2016
Timothy Murray

B=H=5
2016
Timothy Murray







KIRKHAM

KIRKHAM
T.M. & © 2009

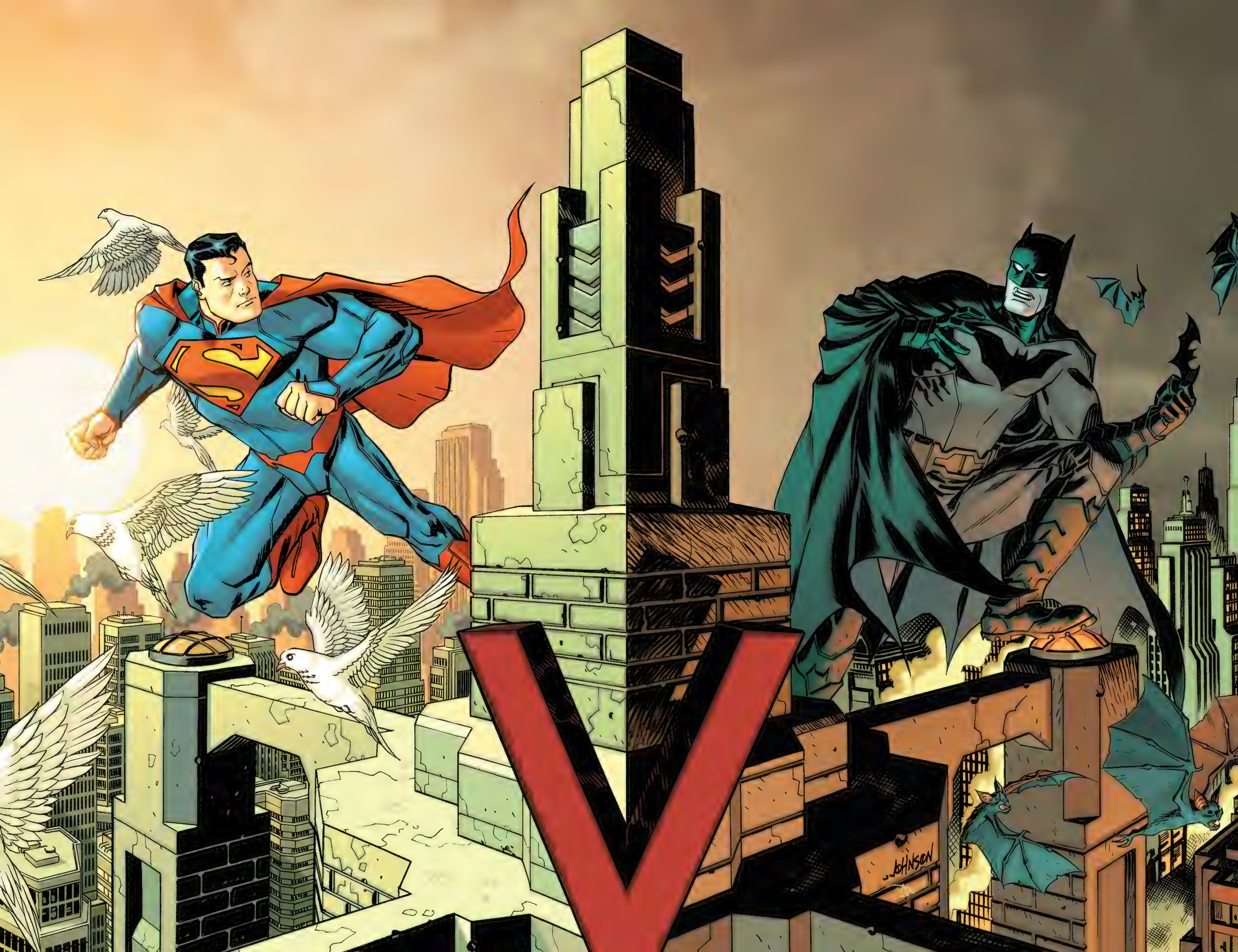






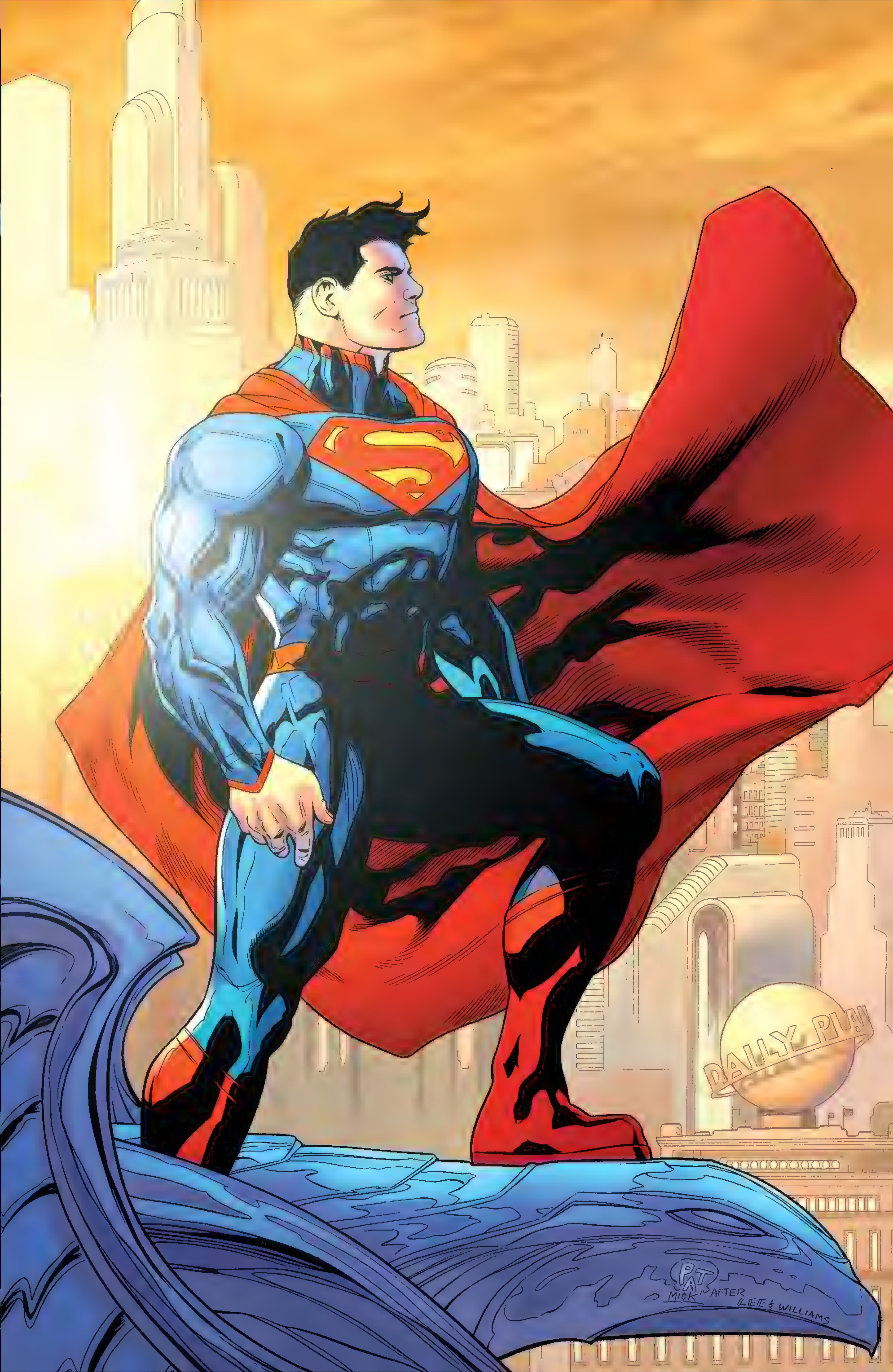








PAT AFTER LEE & WILLIAMS
MICK











BATMAN RETURNS?

"Scott Snyder has reinvented Batman, deepening and humanizing the Dark Knight's myth—in the making since 1939—like no one since Frank Miller in the 1980s."

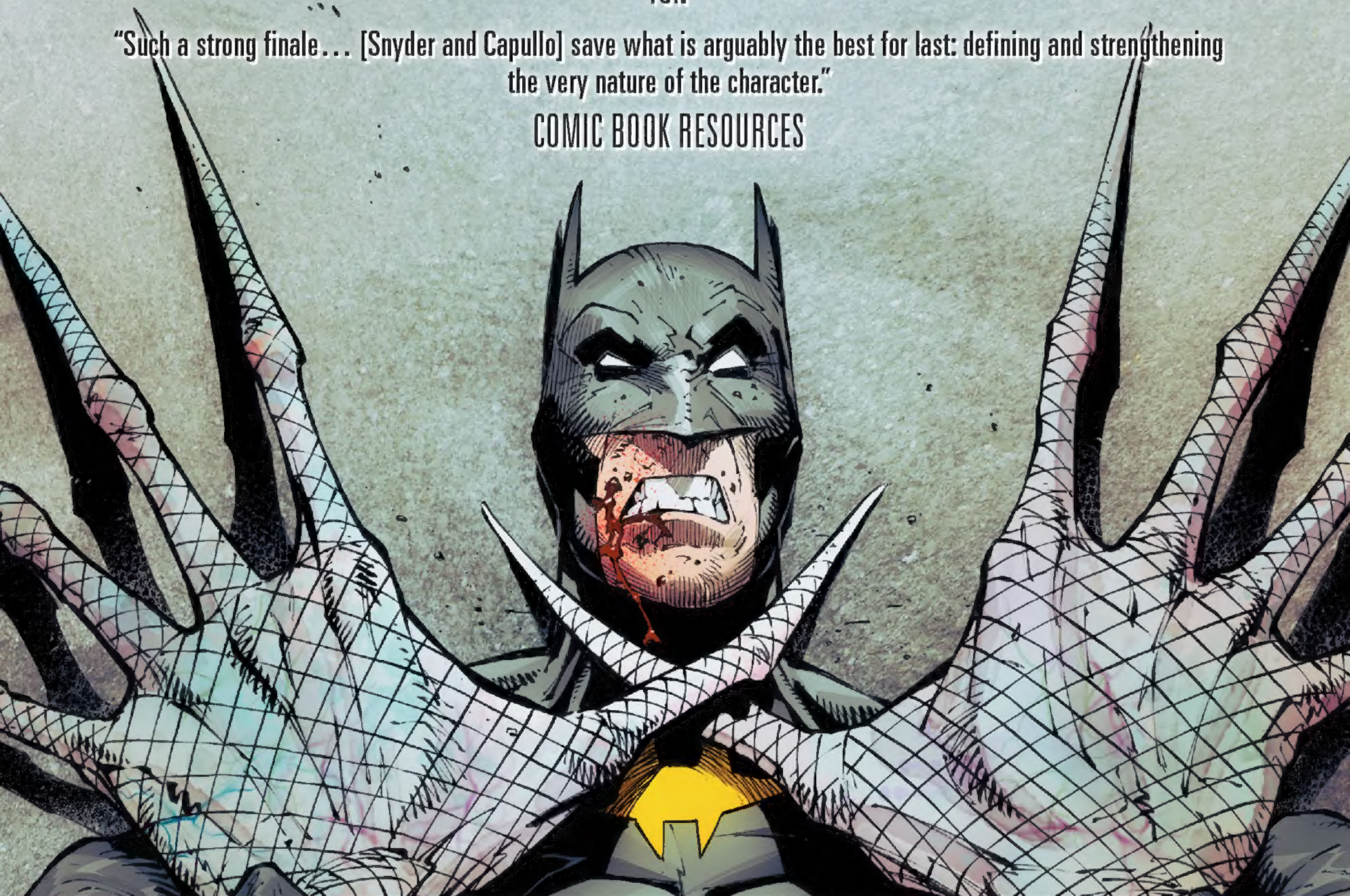
THE NEW YORK TIMES

"It's gorgeously rendered and emotionally stirring, reminding us that a fictional character like Batman can shape and influence the world in very real ways."

IGN

"Such a strong finale... [Snyder and Capullo] save what is arguably the best for last: defining and strengthening the very nature of the character."

COMIC BOOK RESOURCES



Bruce Wayne has a nearly perfect life. He's in love with an amazing woman and works by her side every day at one of Gotham's youth centers, helping the children of the city he loves. His memory has been patchy ever since he nearly died in the last Joker attack, but even so, he's confident that this is the happiest he's ever been.

And yet...he sometimes feels himself being tugged back to another life. In the negative space of his missing past is a half-remembered history, filled with violence and darkness, but also greatness.

The Batman is calling Bruce back. But if he returns to his past, what will become of the perfect, happy life he has built?

SCOTT SNYDER and **GREG CAPULLO** conclude their character-defining run on the Dark Knight and demonstrate why Batman truly is forever. Collects BATMAN #46-50, as well as a story from DETECTIVE COMICS #27.

